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The World's Great Sermons

VOLUME X

DRUMMOND TO JOWETT

THE WORLD'S GREAT SERMONS

COMPILED BY

GRENVILLE KLEISER

Formerly of Yale Divinity School Faculty;
Author of "How to Speak
in Public," Etc.

With Assistance from Many of the Foremost
Living Preachers and Other Theologians

INTRODUCTION BY

LEWIS O. BRASTOW, D.D.

Professor Emeritus of Practical Theology
in Yale University

IN TEN VOLUMES

VOLUME X—DRUMMOND TO JOWETT

General Index

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CONTENTS

VOLUME X

	Page
DRUMMOND (1851—1897).	
The Greatest Thing in the World	1
WAGNER (Born in 1851).	
I Am a Voice	37
GORDON (Born in 1853).	
Man in the Image of God	57
DAWSON (Born in 1854).	
Christ Among the Common Things of Life	81
SMITH (Born in 1856).	
Assurance in God	97
GUNSAULUS (Born in 1856).	
The Bible vs. Infidelity	109
HILLIS (Born in 1858).	
God the Unwearied Guide	137
JEFFERSON (Born in 1860).	
The Reconciliation	157
MORGAN (Born in 1863).	
The Perfect Ideal of Life	187
CADMAN (Born in 1864).	
A New Day for Missions	203
JOWETT (Born in 1864).	
Apostolic Optimism	217
Index to Preachers and Sermons	237
Index to Texts	250

DRUMMOND

THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

HENRY DRUMMOND, author and evangelist, was born at Stirling, Scotland, in 1851. His book, "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," caused much discussion and is still widely read. His "Ascent of Man" is regarded by many as his greatest work. The address reprinted here has appeared in hundreds of editions, and has been an inspiration to thousands of peoples all over the world. There is an interesting biography of Drummond by Professor George Adam Smith, his close friend and colaborer. He died in 1897.

DRUMMOND

1851—1897

THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD[1]

Tho I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, &c.—1 Cor. xiii.

EVERY one has asked himself the great question of antiquity as of the modern world: What is the *summum bonum*—the supreme good? You have life before you. Once only you can live it. What is the noblest object of desire, the supreme gift to covet?

We have been accustomed to be told that the greatest thing in the religious world is faith. That great word has been the key-note for centuries of the popular religion; and we have easily learned to look upon it as the greatest thing in the world. Well, we are wrong. If we have been told that, we may miss the mark. I have taken you, in the chapter which I have just read, to Christianity at its source; and there we have seen, "The greatest of these is love." It is not an oversight. Paul was speaking of faith just a moment before. He says, "If I have all faith, so that I can remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing." So far from forgetting,

[1] Reprinted by permission of James Pott & Co.

he deliberately contrasts them, "Now abideth faith, hope, love," and without a moment's hesitation the decision falls, "The greatest of these is love."

And it is not prejudice. A man is apt to recommend to others his own strong point. Love was not Paul's strong point. The observing student can detect a beautiful tenderness growing and ripening all through his character as Paul gets old; but the hand that wrote, "The greatest of these is love," when we meet it first, is stained with blood.

Nor is this letter to the Corinthians peculiar in singling out love as the *summum bonum*. The masterpieces of Christianity are agreed about it. Peter says, "Above all things have fervent love among yourselves." Above all things. And John goes further, "God is love." And you remember the profound remark which Paul makes elsewhere, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Did you ever think what he meant by that? In those days men were working their passage to heaven by keeping the ten commandments, and the hundred and ten other commandments which they had manufactured out of them. Christ said, I will show you a more simple way. If you do one thing, you will do these hundred and ten things, without ever thinking about them. If you love, you will unconsciously fulfil the whole law. And you can readily see for yourselves how that must be so. Take

any of the commandments. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." If a man love God, you will not require to tell him that. Love is the fulfilling of that law. "Take not his name in vain." Would he ever dream of taking His name in vain if he loved Him? "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Would he not be too glad to have one day in seven to dedicate more exclusively to the object of his affection? Love would fulfil all these laws regarding God. And so, if he loved man, you would never think of telling him to honor his father and mother. He could not do anything else. It would be preposterous to tell him not to kill. You could only insult him if you suggested that he should not steal —how could he steal from those he loved? It would be superfluous to beg him not to bear false witness against his neighbor. If he loved him it would be the last thing he would do. And you would never dream of urging him not to covet what his neighbors had. He would rather that they possest it than himself. In this way "Love is the fulfilling of the law." It is the rule for fulfilling all rules, the new commandment for keeping all the old commandments, Christ's one secret of the Christian life.

Now, Paul had learned that; and in this noble eulogy he has given us the most wonderful and original account extant of the *summum bonum.* We may divide it into three

parts. In the beginning of the short chapter, we have love contrasted; in the heart of it, we have love analyzed; toward the end, we have love defended as the supreme gift.

Paul begins contrasting love with other things that men in those days thought much of. I shall not attempt to go over those things in detail. Their inferiority is already obvious.

He contrasts it with eloquence. And what a noble gift it is, the power of playing upon the souls and wills of men, and rousing them to lofty purposes and holy deeds. Paul says, "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." And we all know why. We have all felt the brazenness of words without emotion, the hollowness, the unaccountable unpersuasiveness, of eloquence behind which lies no love.

He contrasts it with prophecy. He contrasts it with mysteries. He contrasts it with faith. He contrasts it with charity. Why is love greater than faith? Because the end is greater than the means. And why is it greater than charity? Because the whole is greater than the part. Love is greater than faith, because the end is greater than the means. What is the use of having faith? It is to connect the soul with God. And what is the object of connecting man with God? That he may become like God. But God is love. Hence faith, the means, is in order to love, the

end. Love, therefore, obviously is greater than faith. It is greater than charity, again, because the whole is greater than a part. Charity is only a little bit of love, one of the innumerable avenues of love, and there may even be, and there is, a great deal of charity without love. It is a very easy thing to toss a copper to a beggar on the street; it is generally an easier thing than not to do it. Yet love is just as often in the withholding. We purchase relief from the sympathetic feelings roused by the spectacle of misery, at the copper's cost. It is too cheap—too cheap for us, and often too dear for the beggar. If we really loved him we would either do more for him, or less.

Then Paul contrasts it with sacrifice and martyrdom. And I beg the little band of would-be missionaries—and I have the honor to call some of you by this name for the first time—to remember that tho you give your bodies to be burned, and have not love, it profits nothing—nothing! You can take nothing greater to the heathen world than the impress and reflection of the love of God upon your own character. That is the universal language. It will take you years to speak in Chinese, or in the dialects of India. From the day you land, that language of love, understood by all, will be pouring forth its unconscious eloquence. It is the man who is the missionary, it is not his words. His char-

acter is his message. In the heart of Africa, among the great lakes, I have come across black men and women who remembered the only white man they ever saw before—David Livingstone; and as you cross his footsteps in that dark continent, men's faces light up as they speak of the kind doctor who passed there years ago. They could not understand him; but they felt the love that beat in his heart. Take into your new sphere of labor, where you also mean to lay down your life, that simple charm, and your life-work must succeed. You can take nothing greater, you need take nothing less. It is not worth while going if you take anything less. You may take every accomplishment; you may be braced for every sacrifice; but if you give your body to be burned, and have not love, it will profit you and the cause of Christ nothing.

After contrasting love with these things, Paul, in three verses, very short, gives us an amazing analysis of what this supreme thing is. I ask you to look at it. It is a compound thing, he tells us. It is like light. As you have seen a man of science take a beam of light and pass it through a crystal prism, as you have seen it come out on the other side of the prism broken up into its component colors—red, and blue, and yellow, and violet, and orange, and all the colors of the rainbow—so Paul passes this thing, love, through the magnificent prism of his inspired intellect,

and it comes out on the other side broken up into its elements. And in these few words we have what one might call the spectrum of love, the analysis of love. Will you observe what its elements are? Will you notice that they have common names; that they are virtues which we hear about every day, that they are things which can be practised by every man in every place in life; and how, by a multitude of small things and ordinary virtues, the supreme thing, the *summum bonum*, is made up?

The spectrum of love has nine ingredients:

1. Patience—"Love suffereth long."
2. Kindness—"And is kind."
3. Generosity—"Love envieth not."
4. Humility—"Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up."
5. Courtesy—"Doth not behave itself unseemly."
6. Unselfishness—"Seeketh not her own."
7. Good temper—"Is not easily provoked."
8. Guilelessness—"Thinketh no evil."
9. Sincerity—"Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth."

Patience, kindness, generosity, humility, courtesy, unselfishness, good temper, guilelessness, sincerity—these make up the supreme gift, the stature of the perfect man. You will observe that all are in relation to men, in relation to life, in relation to the known to-day and the near to-morrow, and not to the unknown eternity. We hear much of love to God; Christ spoke much of love

to man. We make a great deal of peace with heaven; Christ made much of peace on earth. Religion is not a strange or added thing, but the inspiration of the secular life, the breathing of an eternal spirit through this temporal world. The supreme thing, in short, is not a thing at all, but the giving of a further finish to the multitudinous words and acts which make up the sum of every common day.

There is no time to do more than to make a passing note upon each of these ingredients. Love is patience. This is the normal attitude of love; love passive, love waiting to begin; not in a hurry; calm; ready to do its work when the summons comes, but meantime wearing the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Love suffers long; beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things. For love understands, and therefore waits.

Kindness. Love active. Have you ever noticed how much of Christ's life was spent in doing kind things—in merely doing kind things? Run over it with that in view, and you will find that He spent a great proportion of His time simply in making people happy, in doing good turns to people. There is only one thing greater than happiness in the world, and that is holiness; and it is not in our keeping; but what God has put in our power is the happiness of those about us, and that is largely to be secured by our being kind to them.

"The greatest thing," says some one, "a man can do for his Heavenly Father is to be kind to some of his other children." I wonder why it is that we are not all kinder than we are? How much the world needs it. How easily it is done. How instantaneously it acts. How infallibly it is remembered. How superabundantly it pays itself back—for there is no debtor in the world so honorable, so superbly honorable, as love. "Love never faileth." Love is success, love is happiness, love is life. "Love," I say, with Browning, "is energy of life."

> For life, with all it yields of joy or wo
> And hope and fear,
> Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love—
> How love might be, hath been indeed, and is.

Where love is, God is. He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God. God is love. Therefore love. Without distinction, without calculation, without procrastination, love. Lavish it upon the poor, where it is very easy; especially upon the rich, who often need it most; most of all upon our equals, where it is very difficult, and for whom perhaps we each do least of all. There is a difference between trying to please and giving pleasure. Give pleasure. Lose no chance of giving pleasure. For that is the ceaseless and anonymous triumph of a truly loving spirit. "I shall pass through this world but once. Any good

thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

Generosity. "Love envieth not." This is love in competition with others. Whenever you attempt a good work you will find other men doing the same kind of work, and probably doing it better. Envy them not. Envy is a feeling of ill-will to those who are in the same line as ourselves, a spirit of covetousness and detraction. How little Christian work even is a protection against unchristian feeling! That most despicable of all the unworthy moods which cloud a Christian's soul assuredly waits for us on the threshold of every work, unless we are fortified with this grace of magnanimity. Only one thing truly needs the Christian envy, the large, rich, generous soul which "envieth not."

And then, after having learned all that, you have to learn this further thing, humility —to put a seal upon your lips and forget what you have done. After you have been kind, after love has stolen forth into the world and done its beautiful work, go back into the shade again and say nothing about it. Love hides even from itself. Love waives even self-satisfaction. "Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up."

The fifth ingredient is a somewhat strange one to find in this *summum bonum*: Courtesy.

This is love in society, love in relation to etiquette. "Love doth not behave itself unseemly." Politeness has been defined as love in trifles. Courtesy is said to be love in little things. And the one secret of politeness is to love. Love can not behave itself unseemly. You can put the most untutored persons into the highest society, and if they have a reservoir of love in their hearts, they will not behave themselves unseemly. They simply can not do it. Carlyle said of Robert Burns that there was no truer gentleman in Europe than the plowman-poet. It was because he loved everything—the mouse, the daisy, and all the things, great and small, that God had made. So with this simple passport he could mingle with any society, and enter courts and palaces from his little cottage on the banks of the Ayr. You know the meaning of the word "gentleman." It means a gentle man —a man who does things gently with love. And that is the whole art and mystery of it. The gentle man can not in the nature of things do an ungentle and ungentlemanly thing. The ungentle soul, the inconsiderate, unsympathetic nature can not do anything else. "Love doth not behave itself unseemly."

Unselfishness. "Love seeketh not her own." Observe: Seeketh not even that which is her own. In Britain the Englishman is devoted, and rightly, to his rights. But there come times when a man may exercise even the

higher right of giving up his rights. Yet Paul does not summon us to give up our rights. Love strikes much deeper. It would have us not seek them at all, ignore them, eliminate the personal element altogether from our calculations. It is not hard to give up our rights. They are often external. The difficult thing is to give up ourselves. The more difficult thing still is not to seek things for ourselves at all. After we have sought them, bought them, won them, deserved them, we have taken the cream off them for ourselves already. Little cross then perhaps to give them up. But not to seek them, to look every man not on his own things, but on the things of others —*id opus est.* "Seekest thou great things for thyself?" said the prophet; "seek them not." Why? Because there is no greatness in things. Things can not be great. The only greatness is unselfish love. Even self-denial in itself is nothing, is almost a mistake. Only a great purpose or a mightier love can justify the waste. It is more difficult, I have said, not to seek our own at all, than, having sought it, to give it up. I must take that back. It is only true of a partly selfish heart. Nothing is a hardship to love, and nothing is hard. I believe that Christ's yoke is easy. Christ's "yoke" is just His way of taking life. And I believe it is an easier way than any other. I believe it is a happier way than any other. The most obvious lesson in Christ's teaching

is that there is no happiness in having and getting anything, but only in giving. I repeat, there is no happiness in having or in getting, but only in giving. And half the world is on the wrong scent in the pursuit of happiness. They think it consists in having and getting, and in being served by others. It consists in giving and serving others. He that would be great among you, said Christ, let him serve. He that would be happy, let him remember that there is but one way—it is more blest, it is more happy, to give than to receive.

The next ingredient is a very remarkable one: good temper. "Love is not easily provoked." Nothing could be more striking than to find this here. We are inclined to look upon bad temper as a very harmless weakness. We speak of it as a mere infirmity of nature, a family failing, a matter of temperament, not a thing to take into very serious account in estimating a man's character. And yet here, right in the heart of this analysis of love, it finds a place; and the Bible again and again returns to condemn it as one of the most destructive elements in human nature.

The peculiarity of ill temper is that it is the vice of the virtuous. It is often the one blot on an otherwise noble character. You know men who are all but perfect, and women who would be entirely perfect, but for an easily ruffled, quick-tempered, or "touchy"

[illegible] This compatibility of ill temper [illegible] is one of the [illegible] of ethics. The [illegible] of sins— [illegible] sins of the disposition. [illegible] as a type of [illegible] of the second. Now [illegible] which of [illegible] without [illegible] But are we [illegible] to weigh one [illegible] and finer are but [illegible] in the higher nature [illegible] than those in the lower, [illegible] who is love, a sin [illegible] a hundred times more [illegible] not worldliness, not [illegible] itself, does [illegible] than evil tem- [illegible] for breaking up [illegible] the most sacred [illegible] homes, for [illegible] women, for taking the [illegible] for sheer gra- [illegible] power, this influ- [illegible] at the Elder Brother, [illegible] patient, dutiful—let [illegible] look at this [illegible] his own [illegible] we read, [illegible] look at the effect [illegible] upon the servants, upon the

happiness of the guests. Judge of the effect upon the Prodigal—and how many prodigals are kept out of the kingdom of God by the unlovely character of those who profess to be inside? Analyze, as a study in temper, the thunder-cloud itself as it gathers upon the Elder Brother's brow. What is it made of? Jealousy, anger, pride, uncharity, cruelty, self-righteousness, touchiness, doggedness, sullenness—these are the ingredients of this dark and loveless soul. In varying proportions, also, these are the ingredients of all ill temper. Judge if such sins of the disposition are not worse to live in, and for others to live with, than sins of the body. Did Christ indeed not answer the question Himself when He said, "I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before you." There is really no place in heaven for a disposition like this. A man with such a mood could only make heaven miserable for all the people in it. Except, therefore, such a man be born again, he can not, he simply can not, enter the kingdom of heaven. For it is perfectly certain—and you will not misunderstand me—that to enter heaven a man must take it with him.

You will see then why temper is significant. It is not in what it is alone, but in what it reveals. This is why I take the liberty now of speaking of it with such unusual plainness. It is a test for love, a symptom, a revelation

disposition. This compatibility of ill temper with high moral character is one of the strangest and saddest problems of ethics. The truth is, there are two great classes of sins—sins of the body, and sins of the disposition. The Prodigal Son may be taken as a type of the first, the Elder Brother of the second. Now society has no doubt whatever as to which of these is the worse. Its brands fall without a challenge, upon the Prodigal. But are we right? We have no balance to weigh one another's sins, and coarser and finer are but human words; but faults in the higher nature may be less venial than those in the lower, and to the eye of Him who is love, a sin against love may seem a hundred times more base. No form of vice, not worldliness, not greed of gold, not drunkenness itself, does more to unchristianize society than evil temper. For embittering life, for breaking up communities, for destroying the most sacred relationships, for devastating homes, for withering up men and women, for taking the bloom off childhood, in short, for sheer gratuitous misery-producing power, this influence stands alone. Look at the Elder Brother, moral, hard-working, patient, dutiful—let him get all credit for his virtues—look at this man, this baby, sulking outside his own father's door. "He was angry," we read, "and would not go in." Look at the effect upon the father, upon the servants, upon the

happiness of the guests. Judge of the effect upon the Prodigal—and how many prodigals are kept out of the kingdom of God by the unlovely character of those who profess to be inside? Analyze, as a study in temper, the thunder-cloud itself as it gathers upon the Elder Brother's brow. What is it made of? Jealousy, anger, pride, uncharity, cruelty, self-righteousness, touchiness, doggedness, sullenness—these are the ingredients of this dark and loveless soul. In varying proportions, also, these are the ingredients of all ill temper. Judge if such sins of the disposition are not worse to live in, and for others to live with, than sins of the body. Did Christ indeed not answer the question Himself when He said, "I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before you." There is really no place in heaven for a disposition like this. A man with such a mood could only make heaven miserable for all the people in it. Except, therefore, such a man be born again, he can not, he simply can not, enter the kingdom of heaven. For it is perfectly certain—and you will not misunderstand me—that to enter heaven a man must take it with him.

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of an unloving nature at bottom. It is the intermittent fever which bespeaks unintermittent disease within; the occasional bubble escaping to the surface which betrays some rottenness underneath; a sample of the most hidden products of the soul dropt involuntarily when off one's guard; in a word, the lightning form of a hundred hideous and unchristian sins. For a want of patience, a want of kindness, a want of generosity, a want of courtesy, a want of unselfishness, are all instantaneously symbolized in one flash of temper.

Hence it is not enough to deal with the temper. We must go to the source, and change the inmost nature, and the angry humors will die away of themselves. Souls are made sweet not by taking the acid fluids out, but by putting something in—a great love, a new spirit, the spirit of Christ. Christ, the spirit of Christ, interpenetrating ours, sweetens, purifies, transforms all. This only can eradicate what is wrong, work a chemical change, renovate and regenerate, and rehabilitate the inner man. Will-power does not change men. Time does not change men. Christ does. Therefore, "Let that mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Some of us have not much time to lose. Remember, once more, that this is a matter of life or death. I can not help speaking urgently, for myself, for yourselves. "Whoso shall offend

one of these little ones, which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." That is to say, it is the deliberate verdict of the Lord Jesus that it is better not to live than not to love. *It is better not to live than not to love.*

Guilelessness and sincerity may be dismissed almost without a word. Guilelessness is the grace for suspicious people. And the possession of it is the great secret of personal influence. You will find, if you think for a moment, that the people who influence you are people who believe in you. In an atmosphere of suspicion men shrivel up; but in that other atmosphere they expand, and find encouragement and educative fellowship. It is a wonderful thing that here and there in this hard, uncharitable world there should still be left a few rare souls who think no evil. This is the great unworldliness. Love "thinketh no evil," imputes no bad motive, sees the bright side, puts the best construction on every action. What a delightful state of mind to live in! What stimulus and benediction even to meet with it for a day! To be trusted is to be saved. And if we try to influence or elevate others, we shall soon see that success is in proportion to their belief of our belief in them. For the respect of another is the first restoration of the self-respect a man has lost; our ideal of what he

is becomes to him the hope and pattern of what he may become.

"Love rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." I have called this sincerity from the words rendered in the Authorized Version by "rejoiceth in the truth." And, certainly, were this the real translation, nothing could be more just. For he who loves will love truth not less than men. He will rejoice in the truth—rejoice not in what he has been taught to believe; not in this Church's doctrine or in that; not in this ism or in that ism; but "in the truth." He will accept only what is real; he will strive to get at facts; he will search for truth with an humble and unbiased mind, and cherish whatever he finds at any sacrifice. But the more literal translation of the Revised Version calls for just such a sacrifice for truth's sake here. For what Paul really meant is, as we there read, "Rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth," a quality which probably no one English word—and certainly not sincerity—adequately defines. It includes, perhaps more strictly, the self-restraint which refuses to make capital out of others' faults; the charity which delights not in exposing the weakness of others, but "covereth all things"; the sincerity of purpose which endeavors to see things as they are, and rejoices to find them better than suspicion feared or calumny denounced.

So much for the analysis of love. Now the business of our lives is to have these things in our characters. That is the supreme work to which we need to address ourselves in this world to learn love. Is life not full of opportunities for learning love? Every man and woman every day has a thousand of them. The world is not a playground; it is a schoolroom. Life is not a holiday, but an education. And the one eternal lesson for us all is how better we can love. What makes a man a good cricketer? Practise. What makes a man a good artist, a good sculptor, a good musician? Practise. What makes a man a good linguist, a good stenographer? Practise. What makes a man a good man. Practise. Nothing else. There is nothing capricious about religion. We do not get the soul in different ways, under different laws, from those in which we get the body and the mind. If a man does not exercise his arm he develops no biceps muscle; and if he does not exercise his soul, he acquires no muscle in his soul, no strength of character, no vigor of moral fiber nor beauty of spiritual growth. Love is not a thing of enthusiastic emotion. It is a rich, strong, manly, vigorous expression of the whole round Christian character—the Christlike nature in its fullest development. And the constituents of this great character are only to be built up by ceaseless practise.

What was Christ doing in the carpenter's

shop? Practising. Tho perfect, we read that He learned obedience, and grew in wisdom and in favor with God. Do not quarrel, therefore, with your lot in life. Do not complain of its never-ceasing cares, its petty environment, the vexations you have to stand, the small and sordid souls you have to live and work with. Above all, do not resent temptation; do not be perplexed because it seems to thicken round you more and more, and ceases neither for effort nor for agony nor prayer. That is your practise. That is the practise which God appoints you; and it is having its work in making you patient, and humble, and generous, and unselfish, and kind, and courteous. Do not grudge the hand that is molding the still too shapeless image within you. It is growing more beautiful, tho you see it not, and every touch of temptation may add to its perfection. Therefore keep in the midst of life. Do not isolate yourself. Be among men, and among things, and among troubles, and difficulties, and obstacles. You remember Goethe's words: *Es bildet ein Talent sich in der Stille, Doch ein Character in dem Strom der Welt.* "Talent develops itself in solitude; character in the stream of life." Talent develops itself in solitude—the talent of prayer, of faith, of meditation, of seeing the unseen; character grows in the stream of the world's life. That chiefly is where men are to learn love.

How? Now how? To make it easier, I have named a few of the elements of love. But these are only elements. Love itself can never be defined. Light is a something more than the sum of its ingredients—a glowing, dazzling, tremulous ether. And love is something more than all its elements—a palpitating, quivering, sensitive, living thing. By synthesis of all the colors, men can make whiteness, they can not make light. By synthesis of all the virtues, men can make virtue, they can not make love. How then are we to have this transcendent living whole conveyed into our souls? We brace our wills to secure it. We try to copy those who have it. We lay down rules about it. We watch. We pray. But these things alone will not bring love into our nature. Love is an effect. And only as we fulfil the right condition can we have the effect produced. Shall I tell you what the cause is?

If you turn to the Revised Version of the First Epistle of John you will find these words: "We love because he first loved us." "We love," not "We love him." That is the way the old version has it, and it is quite wrong. "We love—because he first loved us." Look at that word "because." It is the cause of which I have spoken. "Because he first loved us," the effect follows that we love, we love Him, we love all men. We can not help it. Because He loved us, we love,

we love everybody. Our heart is slowly changed. Contemplate the love of Christ, and you will love. Stand before that mirror, reflect Christ's character, and you will be changed into the same image from tenderness to tenderness. There is no other way. You can not love to order. You can only look at the lovely object, and fall in love with it, and grow into likeness to it. And so look at this perfect character, this perfect life. Look at the great sacrifice as He laid down Himself, all through life, and upon the cross of Calvary; and you must love Him. And loving Him, you must become like Him. Love begets love. It is a process of induction. Put a piece of iron in the presence of an electrified body, and that piece of iron for a time becomes electrified. It is changed into a temporary magnet in the mere presence of a permanent magnet, and as long as you leave the two side by side they are both magnets alike. Remain side by side with Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us, and you too will become a permanent magnet, a permanently attractive force; and like Him you will draw all men unto you; like Him you will be drawn unto all men. That is the inevitable effect of love. Any man who fulfils that cause must have that effect produced in him. Try to give up the idea that religion comes to us by chance, or by mystery, or by caprice. It comes to us by natural law, or by spiritual

law, for all law is divine. Edward Irving went to see a dying boy once, and when he entered the room he just put his hand on the sufferer's head, and said, "My boy, God loves you," and went away. And the boy started from his bed, and called out to the people in the house, "God loves me! God loves me!" It changed that boy. The sense that God loved him overpowered him, melted him down, and began the creating of a new heart in him. And that is how the love of God melts down the unlovely heart in man, and begets in him the new creature, who is patient and humble and gentle and unselfish. And there is no other way to get it. There is no mystery about it. We love others, we love everybody, we love our enemies, because He first loved us.

Now I have a closing sentence or two to add about Paul's reason for singling out love as the supreme possession. It is a very remarkable reason. In a single word it is this: it lasts. "Love," urges Paul, "never faileth." Then he begins one of his marvelous lists of the great things of the day, and exposes them one by one. He runs over the things that men thought were going to last, and shows that they are all fleeting, temporary, passing away.

"Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail." It was the mother's ambition for her boy in those days that he should become a prophet. For hundreds of years God had

never spoken by means of any prophet, and at that time the prophet was greater than the king. Men waited wistfully for another messenger to come, and hung upon his lips when he appeared as upon the very voice of God. Paul says, "Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail." This book is full of prophecies. One by one they have "failed"; that is, having been fulfilled their work is finished; they have nothing more to do now in the world except to feed a devout man's faith.

Then Paul talks about tongues. That was another thing that was greatly coveted. "Whether there be tongues, they shall cease." As we all know, many, many centuries have passed since tongues have been known in this world. They have ceased. Take it in any sense you like. Take it, for illustration merely, as languages in general—a sense which was not in Paul's mind at all, and which tho it can not give us the specific lesson will point the general truth. Consider the words in which these chapters were written—Greek. It has gone. Take the Latin—the other great tongue of those days. It ceased long ago. Look at the Indian language. It is ceasing. The language of Wales, of Ireland, of the Scottish Highlands is dying before our eyes. The most popular book in the English tongue at the present time, except the Bible, is one of Dickens' works, his "Pickwick

Papers." It is largely written in the language of London street-life, and experts assure us that in fifty years it will be unintelligible to the average English reader.

Then Paul goes further, and with even greater boldness adds, "Whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." The wisdom of the ancients, where is it? It is wholly gone. A schoolboy to-day knows more than Sir Isaac Newton knew. His knowledge has vanished away. You put yesterday's newspaper in the fire. Its knowledge has vanished away. You buy the old editions of the great encyclopedias for a few cents. Their knowledge has vanished away. Look how the coach has been superseded by the use of steam. Look how electricity has superseded that, and swept a hundred almost new inventions into oblivion. One of the greatest living authorities, Sir William Thompson, said the other day, "The steam-engine is passing away." "Whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." At every workshop you will see, in the back yard, a heap of old iron, a few wheels, a few levers, a few cranks, broken and eaten with rust. Twenty years ago that was the pride of the city. Men flocked in from the country to see the great invention; now it is superseded, its day is done. And all the boasted science and philosophy of this day will soon be old. But yesterday, in the University of Edinburgh, the greatest figure in

the faculty was Sir James Simpson, the discoverer of chloroform. The other day his successor and nephew, Professor Simpson, was asked by the librarian of the university to go to the library and pick out the books on his subject that were no longer needed. And his reply to the librarian was this: "Take every text-book that is more than ten years old, and put it down in the cellar." Sir James Simpson was a great authority only a few years ago; men came from all parts of the earth to consult him; and almost the whole teaching of that time is consigned by the science of to-day to oblivion. And in every branch of science it is the same. "Now we know in part. We see through a glass darkly."

Can you tell me anything that is going to last? Many things Paul did not condescend to name. He did not mention money, fortune, fame; but he picked out the great things of his time, the things the best men thought had something in them, and brushed them peremptorily aside. Paul had no charge against these things in themselves. All he said about them was that they would not last. They were great things, but not supreme things. There were things beyond them. What we are stretches past what we do, beyond what we possess. Many things that men denounce as sins are not sins; but they are temporary. And that is a favorite argument of the New Testament. John says of the world, not that

it is wrong, but simply that it "passeth away." There is a great deal in the world that is delightful and beautiful; there is a great deal in it that is great and engrossing; but it will not last. All that is in the world, the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, are but for a little while. Love not the world therefore. Nothing that it contains is worth the life and consecration of an immortal soul. The immortal soul must give itself to something that is immortal. And the immortal things are: "Now abideth faith, hope, love, but the greatest of these is love."

Some think the time may come when two of these three things will also pass away—faith into sight, hope into fruition. Paul does not say so. We know but little now about the conditions of the life that is to come. But what is certain is that love must last. God, the eternal God, is love. Covet therefore that everlasting gift, that one thing which it is certain is going to stand, that one coinage which will be current in the universe when all the other coinages of all the nations of the world shall be useless and unhonored. You will give yourselves to many things, give yourselves first to love. Hold things in their proportion. *Hold things in their proportion.* Let at least the first great object of our lives be to achieve the character defended in these words, the character—and it is the character of Christ—which is built round love.

I have said this thing is eternal. Did you ever notice how continually John associates love and faith with eternal life? I was not told when I was a boy that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should have everlasting life." What I was told, I remember, was, that God so loved the world that, if I trusted in Him, I was to have a thing called peace, or I was to have rest, or I was to have joy, or I was to have safety. But I had to find out for myself that whosoever trusteth in Him—that is, whosoever loveth Him, for trust is only the avenue to love—hath everlasting life. The gospel offers a man life. Never offer men a thimbleful of gospel. Do not offer them merely joy, or merely peace, or merely rest, or merely safety; tell them how Christ came to give men a more abundant life than they have, a life abundant in love, and therefore abundant in salvation for themselves, and large in enterprise for the alleviation and redemption of the world. Then only can the gospel take hold of the whole of a man, body, soul, and spirit, and give to each part of his nature its exercise and reward. Many of the current gospels are addrest only to a part of man's nature. They offer peace, not life; faith, not love; justification, not regeneration. And men slip back again from such religion because it has never really held them. Their nature was not all in it. It

offered no deeper and gladder life-current than the life that was lived before. Surely it stands to reason that only a fuller love can compete with the love of the world.

To love abundantly is to live abundantly, and to love forever is to live forever. Hence, eternal life is inextricably bound up with love. We want to live forever for the same reason that we want to live to-morrow. Why do we want to live to-morrow? It is because there is some one who loves you, and whom you want to see to-morrow, and be with, and love back. There is no other reason why we should live on than that we love and are beloved. It is when a man has no one to love him that he commits suicide. So long as he has friends, those who love him and whom he loves, he will live; because to live is to love. Be it but the love of a dog, it will keep him in life; but let that go and he has no contact with life, no reason to live. He dies by his own hand. Eternal life is to know God, and God is love. This is Christ's own definition. Ponder it. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Love must be eternal. It is what God is. On the last analysis, then, love is life. Love never faileth, and life never faileth, so long as there is love. That is the philosophy of what Paul is showing us; the reason why in the nature of things love should be the supreme thing—

because it is going to last; because in the nature of things it is an eternal life. It is a thing that we are living now, not that we get when we die; that we shall have a poor chance of getting when we die unless we are living now. No worse fate can befall a man in this world than to live and grow old all alone, unloving and unloved. To be lost is to live in an unregenerate condition, loveless and unloved; and to be saved is to love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth already in God; for God is love.

Now I have all but finished. How many of you will join me in reading this chapter once a week for the next three months? A man did that once and it changed his whole life. You might begin by reading it every day, especially the verses which describe the perfect character. "Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself." Get these ingredients into your life. Then everything that you do is eternal. It is worth doing. It is worth giving time to. No man can become a saint in his sleep; and to fulfil the condition required demands a certain amount of prayer and meditation and time, just as improvement in any direction, bodily or mental, requires preparation and care. Address yourselves to that one thing; at any cost have this transcendent character exchanged for yours. You will find as you look back upon your life that the moments that

stand out, the moments when you have really lived, are the moments when you have done things in a spirit of love. As memory scans the past, above and beyond all the transitory pleasures of life, there leap forward those supreme hours when you have been enabled to do unnoticed kindnesses to those around about you, things too trifling to speak about, but which you feel have entered into your eternal life. I have seen almost all the beautiful things God has made; I have enjoyed almost every pleasure that He has planned for man; and yet as I look back I see standing out above all the life that has gone four or five short experiences when the love of God reflected itself in some poor imitation, some small act of love of mine, and these seem to be the things which alone of all one's life abide. Everything else in all our lives is transitory. Every other good is visionary. But the acts of love which no man knows about, or can ever know about, they never fail.

In the Book of Matthew, where the judgment day is depicted for us in the imagery of One seated upon a throne and dividing the sheep from the goats, the test of a man then is not, "How have I believed?" but "How have I loved?" The test of religion, the final test of religion, is not religiousness, but love. I say the final test of religion at that great day is not religiousness, but love; not what I have done, not what I have believed; not what

I have achieved, but how I have discharged the common charities of life. Sins of commission in that awful indictment are not even referred to. By what we have not done, by sins of omission, we are judged. It could not be otherwise. For the withholding of love is the negation of the spirit of Christ, the proof that we never knew Him, that for us He lived in vain. It means that He suggested nothing in all our thoughts, that He inspired nothing in all our lives, that we were not once near enough to Him to be seized with the spell of His compassion for the world. It means that

> I lived for myself, I thought for myself,
> For myself, and none beside—
> Just as if Jesus had never lived,
> As if He had never died.

It is the Son of Man before whom the nations of the world shall be gathered. It is in the presence of humanity that we shall be charged. And the spectacle itself, the mere sight of it, will silently judge each one. Those will be there whom we have met and helped; or there, the unpitied multitude whom we neglected or despised. No other witness need be summoned. No other charge than lovelessness shall be preferred. Be not deceived. The words which all of us shall one day hear sound not of theology but of life, not of churches and saints but of the hungry and the poor, not

of creeds and doctrines but of shelter and clothing, not of Bibles and prayer-books but of cups of cold water in the name of Christ. Thank God the Christianity of to-day is coming nearer the world's need. Live to help that on. Thank God men know better, by a hair-breadth, what religion is, what God is, who Christ is, where Christ is. Who is Christ? He who fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the sick. And where is Christ? Where?—Whoso shall receive a little child in My name receiveth Me. And who are Christ's? Every one that loveth is born of God.

WAGNER

I AM A VOICE

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

CHARLES WAGNER, French Protestant pastor and moral essayist, was born in 1851 in Alsace. He is at present rector of the Reformed Church in Fontenay-Lous-Bois, in the Department of Seine. He received a comprehensive education at the universities of Paris, Strasburg and Goettingen, and after undertaking many cures in the provinces he went to Paris in 1882, where he occupied himself in a crusade against the degrading tendency of life, art and literature in certain of their Parisian phases. He has been a founder of several popular universities under the auspices of the Society for the Promotion of Morality. He has published many books, and "La Vie Simple" ("The Simple Life") was crowned by the French Academy and has been translated into many European languages, as well as into Japanese. Wagner has been styled the French Tolstoy, but he is less visionary and much more popular and practical in his views than the Russian mystic. The author of "The Simple Life" was greeted with many expressions of warm appreciation on his visit to the United States a few years ago. He was a guest at the Presidential mansion by invitation of President Roosevelt, who has highly commended "The Simple Life."

WAGNER

Born in 1851

I AM A VOICE[1]

I am the voice[2] *of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord.*—John i., 23.

NOTHING is rarer than a personality. So many causes, both interior and exterior, hinder the normal development of human beings, so many hostile forces crush them, so many illusions lead them astray, that there is required a concurrence of extraordinary circumstances to render possible the existence of an independent character. But when, God alone knows at the cost of what efforts and of what happy accidents, a vigorous and original personality has been able to unfold, nothing is rarer than not to see it degenerate into a mere personage. History teaches us that men exceptional in will and energy almost always become obstructive and

[1] From "The Gospel of Life," by Charles Wagner, by permission of the McClure Company, publishers. Copyright, 1905, by McClure, Phillips & Co.

[2] In the French version of the Scriptures it is "*a* voice," and it is necessary to retain this reading in order to render precisely Pastor Wagner's thought.—*Translator.*

mischievous. They commence by serving a cause and end by taking possession of it so completely that, from being its servants, they become its masters. Instead of being men of a cause, they make the cause that of a man, and they degrade the most sacred realities to the paltry level of their ambitious egoism.

Thus, when we meet with strong natures, endowed with the secret of leadership and command, yet able to resist the subtle temptation to which so many of the finer spirits have succumbed, it behooves us to bow and to salute in them a greatness before which all that it is customary to call by that name fades into nothingness.

If ever soul encompassed this greatness, it was that of John the Baptist. John is little known. Of him there remain only a few traits of physiognomy and a few snatches of discourse. But these snatches are full of character, these traits possess a sculptural relief; just as with broken trunks of columns, with fragments of stones, all that is left of temples that were once the marvels of ancient art, they enable us to conceive of the grandeur of the whole edifice to which they once belonged. John was at once strong and humble, energetic and self-detached. Never has an individuality so well-tempered been less personal. Identifying himself completely with his role as precursor, he found perfect happiness in effacing himself in the glory of

Christ, just as the dawn disappears in the splendors of the morning.

History is full of precursors who impede and withstand those whom they had first announced. When the time comes to retire and to give way to those for whom they have prepared the way, they do not have the courage to sacrifice themselves. They go on forever, and often become the worst enemies of the cause they have defended. John knew nothing of these failings which are the perpetual scandal in the development of the kingdom of God. Not only did he say, speaking of Jesus: "He must increase, but I must decrease," but he made all his acts conform to these words.

"This my joy is therefore fulfilled," he said, as he dwelt upon the first advances of the gospel, and he exprest thus a sweetness of sacrifice forever unknown to personal souls that remain vulgar in spite of their genius.

Finally, John described himself metaphorically in that inimitable prophetic speech which explains in full the idea that he formed for himself of his ministry. Under the sway of a morbid curiosity, the crowd, more perplexed by the appearance of the worker than attentive to the work, prest him with questions. Who then art thou, mysterious preacher? Art thou one of the old prophets of Israel, escaped from his rocky tomb? Or art thou perchance He whom we await? No,

answered John, I am neither one of the prophets nor the Messiah himself, I am no one: I am a voice!

I am a voice! This is not a formula that sums up the vocation of the prophets solely, or of all those who, in the pulpit or in the tribune, by the pen or by the public discourse, exert an influence upon their contemporaries. These words are addrest to every one. They define for every man, the humble yet great duty of truth that he is called to fulfil in his sphere and according to the measure of his ability. At the epoch in which we live, such a device is so applicable to the time being, so pressing, so needful for us to hear, that it is wise to engrave it in the very foreground of our consciousness.

To become a voice we must begin by keeping still. We must listen. The whole world is a tongue of which the spirit is the meaning. God engraved its fiery capitals in the immensity of the heavens, and traced its delicate smaller letters on the flower, on the grass, on the human soul, as rich, as incommensurable as the abysses of space. Whosoever you are, brother, before letting yourself utter one word, lend your ear to that voice that seeks you, I might almost add, that implores you. Listen!—Listen to the confused murmur that arises from the human depths, and that, comprising in it all tears, all torments, as well as all joys, becomes the sigh of creation.

Listen in your heart to remorse, the sad and poignant echo that sin, traversing life, leaves everywhere upon its passage. Shut your ear to no sound, however unobtrusive, however sad, it may be. There are voices that issue from the tombs, others that call to you from out the abyss of past ages; repel them not, listen! One and all, they have something to say to you.

But do not be content with listening to man. Pierce nature, and, in visible creation as in the invisible sanctuary of souls, watch attentively for the revelation of Him whose eternal thought every living thing, humble or sublime, translates after its own fashion. He speaks to you in the dark nights and in the bright light of dawn, in the infinite radiance of the worlds beyond all reckoning, and in the humble stalk that awaits, in the valley bottom, its ray of light and its drop of dew. Listen!—If there is anguish in the voice of poor humanity, there are in great nature profound words of soothing, of hope. Look at the flower in the fields, listen to the birds in the skies! After the distrest voices that perturb you, you shall know the voices that relieve and console. There shall befall you that which befell the nun whose memory is preserved for us in the old legends. Listening to the forest voices she had gone, following them always, as far as the thick solitudes where nothing any longer comes to trouble the col-

lected soul. There, in the shade of a tree where she had seated herself, she heard a song till then unknown to her ears. It was the song of the mystic bird. This song said, in marvelous modulations, all that man thinks and feels, all that he suffers, all that he seeks, all that falls short of fulfilment for him. It summed up in harmonies the destinies of living beings and the immense pity that is at the root of things. Softly, on light, strong wings, it lifted the soul to the heights where it looks upon reality. And the nun, her hands clasped, listened, listened without end, forgetting earth, sky, time, forgetting herself. She listened for centuries without ever growing tired, finding in the song that charmed her a sweetness forever new. Dear and truthful image of what the soul experiences when, mute, as respectful as a child and as ready of belief, it listens in the universal silence to the voices that translate for it the things that are eternal!

All those who have become voices have traveled this way. At Patmos or in the desert, on Horeb or on Sinai, they have trembled with fright or started with joy. But everything has its time. There comes a day when all voices, soft or terrible, that man has heard, grow still, to let henceforth only one be heard, which cries to him: "Go! go now and be a witness of the things you have heard! Go! I send you forth as lambs among wolves!

Go! I send you toward men whose brow is harsh, whose heart is wicked, but fear nothing, I shall embolden your face, I shall give you a heart of brass and a forehead of diamond."

When that moment has come, one must, in order to remain faithful to his mission, remember that after all he is only a voice. Truth does not belong to us, it is we who belong to truth! Wo to him who possesses it and treats it as something that belongs to himself. Happy is he who is possest by it! No preference, no kinship, no sympathy counts here. Alas! it is not thus that men understand it. It is for this reason that they degrade truth and that it becomes without power in their hands. Instead of winging its way heavenward in vigorous flight, it crawls along the earth, like an eagle whose wings have been broken. Nothing is sadder than to see how those who ought to lend their voice to truth, turn it to their own uses and play with it. The voice, human speech, that sacred organ, whose whole worth lies in sincerity, has in all ages been the victim of odious profanations. But in this age it is more than ever attainted. The evil from which it suffers is defilement.

At certain epochs a word was as good as a man. It was an act total, supreme, guaranteed by the whole of life. There was no need to sign, to stamp, to legalize. Speech was held between friends and enemies alike, more sacred than any sanctuary, and man main-

tained it, with the obscure but just sentiment that it is at the base of society, and that if words lose their value, there is no longer any society possible. Later the written word was considered sacred. And coming nearer to our own day, we have been able to see the masses, guided ever by that quite legitimate sentiment of the holiness of speech, regard everything printed as gospel truth. Those times are no more. We have lied too much, by the living word, the pen, and the press. We have said and printed too much that is light, false, wittingly disfigured. Armed with an instrumentality that multiplies thought and spreads it broadcast to the four corners of the earth with a rapidity unknown to our fathers, we have made use of it, for the most part, to extend slander more widely and to cause a greater amount of doubtful intelligence to swarm upon the earth. So well have we spun speech out in all our mouths, so thoroughly have we deprived it of its proper nature and caused it to become sophisticated, that it is no longer of the least value. The confidence of the masses in authority, which is one of the slowest and most difficult conquests of humanity, we have lost like a thing of no worth. They no longer say to any one who now lifts up his voice: Who are you? But: What end have you in view? What party do you serve? By what interest are you led? By whom have you been bought? That

there may be a sacred truth, loved, respected, adored; a truth that is worth more than life, to which one may give himself wholly and with happiness—this idea diverts the cynics and makes those whom the cruel experiences of life have rendered distrustful, shake their heads. If ever an epoch has needed to rehabilitate human speech, it is our own. What good are we if it is good for nothing, since it is at the root of all our institutions?

Who will give it back its potency?—They who will know how to resign themselves to being but a voice!

Permit me to bring home to you, by means of a very modest example, what man may gain in force by being but a voice. Look at that clock. When the hour has come, it marks it. Whether it be the hour of birth or of death, the hour of joy or of sorrow, the hour of longed-for meetings, or of heart-breaking farewells, the clock strikes that hour. It is only a mechanism, but it is scrupulously exact, it measures that time which descends to us drop by drop from the bosom of eternity, and when the hammer falls on the brazen bell, the entire universe confirms what it announces. The suns and the worlds mark at this very moment, in the immortal light, the same point of time that is indicated below on earth, some starless night, by the humblest village clock. We must imitate the clock. In full consciousness, through absolute submission, man

should make himself the humble instrument of truth, and go through supreme servitude to supreme power. When he does not do this, he is only an imperfect timepiece. But when, bound by his word, chained to the truth that he serves, he has become its slave, and when, without hate, without preference, without human fear, without other desire than that of being faithful, he proclaims what is just, true, right, good, the rocks are less firm on their base than this man: for he is a voice!

A voice is, if you like, a slight thing. Stilled as soon as it awakened, it is heard only by a few and for a little while. It is said that singers are greatly to be pitied, since posterity can not hear them. Nothing of them remains. And yet how many marvelous forces underlie this apparent fragility! The thunder has its roar, the breeze has its tenderness, but their power is transitory; they are sounds and not voices. A voice is a living sound, it is the vibrant echo of a soul. It is doubtless that most fragile thing, a breath, but joined to that which is most durable, spirit. And it is for this reason that, if the instant when it is born sees it die, centuries of centuries can not destroy its effect. The truth which is in it confers immortality upon it, and when this voice escapes from a human breast, he who speaks, sings or weeps, feels indeed that eternity has concluded an alliance with him. Feeling his fragile testimony confirmed by all

that endures and can not die, he says with Christ: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away!"

The holy labors entrusted to the voice can never be counted. Because of the very fact that it lives and that it contains a soul, it is the great awakener, the incomparable evoker. When, obscure still and unknown, a thought distracts us and slumbers at the bottom of our being, a voice is all that is needed to make it emerge into the light. With maternal tenderness, the voice borrows all the energies of incubation, to infuse with warmth, to fortify, the nascent germs of spiritual life. In it lives and breaks forth what, in the evolving soul, tends feebly and furtively toward the flowering. In short, the voice, speech, the tongue, condenses in a single focus incalculable quantities of rays.

Only think of the efforts that human thought must have made to reach that clearness that enables it to become speech. Every word that you utter without giving it a thought is a monument toward which centuries and multitudes of minds have wrought. A world is contained in it. Poor words! one man decks himself out in them, another wraps himself up in them, but how few know of the warmth of life and love that has put them into the world that they may be forever the witnesses of the past for posterity! No matter, for when they have been made sufficiently to

resound like an inanimate cymbal, there comes an hour when they revive under the breath of a true and living being, and they depart to spread life. Then they fulfil their role as educators. To educate is to explain a being to itself. And this is the benign service that the voice performs. It tells us what we think better than we can ourselves. It unbinds the chains of the captive soul and permits it to take its flight. Happy the child, happy the young man who meets with a voice to decipher him to himself! This is what Christ did in those blest hours when He reunited the children of His people, as a bird reunites its brood under its wings!

What the voice does in detail, it continues to accomplish on the larger scale. At certain moments societies seem a prey to a sort of chaos. A number of contrary forces clash and perturb them, as they perturb and rend individual souls. Men seek, feeling their way, a road that seems to elude them. A crowd of spirits, by the very fact of their contemporaneity, feel themselves distracted and agitated all in the same way. Confusedly and provoked by the same sufferings they elaborate the same ideal and formulate the same desires. But they all wander along twilit paths on the side of the night where the light seems to be breaking through, without, however, being able to pierce the darkness. These are the preliminary agonies of the great his-

torical epochs. Then let a being more powerful, more vital, an elect soul that has passed through this phase and conquered these shadows, become incarnate in a voice! That is enough. The personal word which expresses the soul of that epoch and responds to its needs, is found. It sounds through the world like a new *fiat lux!* Everywhere, in those who listen to it and feel secret affinities with it in themselves, it constitutes a magnificent revelation of light and life. All these hearts vibrate in unison with one; and, gathering up all these scattered notes into a single harmony, he who expresses the sentiments of all, renders an account of the wonderful power of which he is the instrument. No, it is no longer a man that speaks: what sounds upon his lips, is the whole soul of a people, is a whole epoch, is a new world.

A voice is also that inimitable sigh, that pure sob which tells of grief because it issues from a suffering heart. It is pity and compassion, it is the angel of God arriving among us on the caressing breath, a messenger of mercy, and pouring into the tortured depths of our poor heart its healing dew. It is Jesus saying to Mary, and, in her, to all those whom grief afflicts: "Why weepest thou?" It is David singing: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" It is Isaiah crying: "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem!"

A voice is, on the solitary path where our will strays, the faithful shepherd calling his sheep; it is every sign, even tho it be made by the hand of a child, which in the days of forgetfulness and unrestraint, suddenly wakes us and warns us that our feet skirt the abysses.

Then, after the work of education, of creation, of pity, comes the work of severity, of punishment, of destruction. The voice has been compared to a sword. Like it, it flames and punishes. A voice is Nathan rising up before the criminal king and calling down upon his head the avenging lightning of this word: "Thou art the man!" The sword attacks, destroys, but it defends also, and this is its fairest work. Never is the voice more touching than when it is lifted in favor of the weak, and, when, suddenly, in the midst of the iniquities of brute force that it denounces, marks with its stigma, it causes justice to shine forth and the truth to be felt, in the holy soul-traversing thrill, that God Himself is there and that His hour has come!

A voice has its echo. When this echo is sympathetic, it is endowed with the sweetest recompense and obliterates the memory of many sorrows. But this echo is often hostile. It arises from wrath and is increased by hatred. Then it is resistance, riot, that rumbles. It is the passions and the scourged vices that twist and bellow like deer under the lash of the trainer. How many times, O,

faithful voices, souls of peace and truth, has the spirit that animates you driven you to these fearful encounters—you who have heard in the silence of your hearts the holy verities and who know their worth, you are obliged to go bearing them in the face of menace, of mockery, of trembling rage where they seem to us like Daniel in the lion's den! A terrible ordeal! but one before which the testifying voices have never recoiled. Luther, who knew the emotions of the great battles of the spirit where one man is alone in the face of a thousand, where under the growing clamors and the cries of death . . . a voice struggles like a torch in a tempest, has given to the servants of truth a counsel that is the alpha and omega of their austere mission. When they have said all, done all, essayed all, put all their being and all their love into the proclamation of what they have to announce, then, he says, "let them be ready to be hooted at and spat upon!" And not only should they be ready but they should accept this lot with happiness. Christ says to them: "Happy are they that are outraged and persecuted for the sake of justice!"

Alas, the rudest proof for him who speaks the truth is not to arouse indignation. That, at least, is a result, and however sad it may be, it bears witness to him who has spoken. Certain protests, despite their fury, are a sort of involuntary homage. The supreme trial

for a voice is indifference. When John called himself a voice in the wilderness, he alluded to that external solitude where his voice was raised. But this solitude, on certain days was full of life and the gospel cites for our benefit certain facts which prove that the words with which it resounded were not lost in the empty spaces. They moved and struck home from the humblest regions of society to the exalted spheres, to the royal throne itself. John garnered love and hate, blessing and curse, the desirable fruits of all energetic action. Since that time and before, more than one voice has been able, applying them to itself, to give to those prophetic words, "voices in the wilderness," another very melancholy significance. The supreme image of despair is a voice that is lost in the silence, as is lost, in the bosom of dead solitudes, the call that no one hears, for succor that will never come.

After having spoken of the different voices, of their power, of their effects, let us bestow a compassionate remembrance upon the lost voices, on those who were or who are still, in the most lamentable sense of that word, voices in the wilderness.—To be a man, a soul, to have felt the lighting of a holy flame within oneself; to love truth and justice; to feel the pain of contact with a life ruled over by falsehood and violence; at the heart of this poignant contrast between a divine ideal and a heart-rending reality, to receive from his

conscience, from God himself, the command to speak; to put his life into this work, to renounce everything to be only a voice . . . and after all this to see himself forsaken, neglected, despised! To wear oneself out slowly in a strife obscure and without issue; to perish without having aroused either sympathy or opposition, to disappear into oblivion before disappearing in the tomb . . . ah! all the furies, all the bloody reprisals, the dungeons, the gibbets, the massacres, all the martyrdoms by which human wickedness strove to stifle the voice of the just, are less horrible than this extermination by apathy.

And yet, not to press things to this cruel extremity, but remembering the parable of the sower, where so many seeds are lost for the few that take root and flourish, ought we not be willing to be, in the greatest number of cases, voices in the wilderness, only too happy if our thankless labors are recompensed elsewhere by an encouraging echo? Have we not here, on the contrary, the image of human life? we are always aspiring toward an ideal more elevated than that which we realize. We are always precursors, and it becomes us to accept humbly what that destiny holds both of pain and of beauty.

Besides, do we know whether voices that seem to be lost, are so in reality? Are the stones that are hidden in the foundations of a beautiful edifice, and thanks to which the

whole fabric is supported, lost because no one sees them? In the same way it must be that many voices are forgotten apparently, until such time as, added together and finding in each other mutual support, they end by emerging into the full light of day.

To wait and to work; to do his duty, and leave the rest to God; to journey through life, gathering truth into his heart, and then into the family, the Church, the city; to be its faithful voice; this is the best use a man can make of his mortal days. And should it be your lot to be voices in the wilderness; among your children deaf to your cries; among your compatriots insensible to your warnings, console yourselves. Greater than you have suffered the same fate. Unite yourself in spirit to their company and be happy to suffer with them. At least as you come to understand more and more from day to day that truth can not perish, and that it is potent even on feeble lips; you will establish in your hearts faith in the world that endures, and you will be less astonished and less disconcerted when you see the face of this world pass away. You will live by the sacred fire cherished in your souls. Let your furrow close, your hope will not perish! Like Moses on Nebo, you will enter into the silence, having filled your dying eyes with the spectacle of the promised land!

GORDON

MAN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

GEORGE ANGIER GORDON, Congregational divine, was born in Scotland, 1853. He was educated at Harvard, and has been minister of Old South Church, Boston, Massachusetts, since 1884. His pulpit style is conspicuous for its directness and forcefulness. He was lecturer in the Lowell Institute Course, 1900; Lyman Beecher Lecturer, Yale, 1901; university preacher to Harvard, 1886-1890; to Yale, 1888-1901; Harvard overseer. He is the author of "The Witness to Immortality" (1897), and many other works.

GORDON

Born in 1853

MAN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

'And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.—Genesis i., 27.

IT must never be forgotten that all truth lies in the order of life itself. There is a natural environment, and in it have been, real and mighty from the beginning, the laws and forces which science has but recently discovered. Copernicus discovered the true order of the solar system; but the order itself has been there from the morning of time. Newton discovered the force of gravity, but that force has been in the natural situation since creation. Chemists have been able to make out sixty-five or sixty-six irreducible elements; but while chemistry is young, the elements are everlasting. Electricity is the discovery of yesterday, and yet it has been at play in man's environment from the foundation of the world. The continuity of life, from the lowest forms of it up to man, has been a fact from the first; but not until this century has the fact meant anything. Few things impress the imagination more

powerfully than the sense of the forces that have surrounded man from his first appearance on the earth, and that have been noted and utilized only in recent times. There stands the immemorial force, and men have had no eyes for it till yesterday. Thoughtful men begin to look upon the environment in a new spirit. They begin to walk within it in amazement and hope. All the forces of the material universe are here, and only a few things about them have been discovered. The natural environment is rich beyond all calculation or dream; it is exhaustless. Here in the field of man's life is the alluring object of science. Here in the natural situation are the everlasting and benign energies that wait to be discovered and prest into human service.

There is a human environment, and all the fundamental truth about man has been present in it from the start. Moses gave his nomadic brethren the ten words; but they were written in the human heart ages before they were inscribed upon stone. The great Hebrew prophets gave to the world the vision of one God, His righteous government of the world, and His election of a single race for the service of all the races; but God and His government and His method in the education of man were real and mighty before Amos, and Hosea, and Isaiah, and Jeremiah beheld them. Christ revealed the Father through His own divine Sonhood; but the Fatherhood

of God is an eternal truth. Nowhere is the divineness of Christ more obvious than in the ease and adequacy with which He, and He alone, is able to read the meaning of the human situation. Christ as Prophet, as Seer and Discoverer, is most amazing to the most gifted. His eye for fact is divine. He notes the falling sparrow, and at once reaches the universal fatherly foresight and control of God. His consuming vision goes everywhere, turning the hidden truth of life into light and joy in His parables. His teaching is revelation, the unveiling of the aboriginal divine order. He makes nothing; He reveals what God made. And when He increases life it is by showing the path to that increase ordained of God, insight and obedience. The will of God is the final law for heaven and earth; the vision of it and surrender to it are the path of life. Here we touch the depth of the old faith. God the Father creates, and the Son reveals. The order of the Spirit is eternal; the revelation of it is in time and for sense-bound men. Here we see in a mirror and dimly; there they behold face to face. And Christ drew forth into light the divine significance of man's life, as God originally made it; and that divine meaning of existence thus drawn out is the gospel of Christ.

In the text we are carried by a true seer back of all traditions, behind all conventions, beyond all beliefs about life to life itself as it

lies in its own freshness and fulness. We are led to look upon human life newly made, still warm with the touch of the creative hand, and yet containing in it that very hour all that the Lord eventually drew out of it. If the first man had understood himself he would have been essentially a Christian. And therefore I propose to evolve from the original human situation, as described in the text, the outline of what I take to be a great faith.

I. If the first man had understood himself, he would have seen in himself the interpreter of nature. From the first command, "Let there be light," to the final, "Let us make man in our image," there are two things to be noted. There is continuity in the creative process, and there is an ascension from the lower to the higher. The first duty of our self-comprehending Adam will be to look backward. He will look across the wide field whose farther limit lies in cloud and whose hither border touches his feet. He will survey the creative process that has led up to and that has come to its climax in him. And as he thinks of himself as the product of nature, must he not conclude that as reason is the result, reason must have preceded the process and governed it? Humanity is the issue; therefore humanity must have planned the issue and secured it. Back of this march of life, behind this developing and ascending order, out in the darkness, before the light was

created, there was the Mind that accounts for man. Thus the last becomes the first, the man that ends the creative process sees that a human God must have preceded the process.

This truth is one of the greater insights of the time. The continuity of life, from the lowest forms to the highest, has received during the last fifty years an unparalleled recognition. So, too, with the fact of the steady ascent of life. Not indeed in a literal and yet in a true way, the modern scientific conception is a wonderful parallel to the sublime hymn with which the Bible opens. In the beginning was the fire-mist. In that fire-mist began the process of development. It became worlds, systems innumerable, a stellar universe, and within this whole a solar order, an earth beating forward in preparation for the advent of life. Life when it came flowed into countless forms. From the shapeless mass it pushed on upward into successively higher and finer structures, ever aspiring toward man. Ages preceded the advent of man. There were upon the part of life ages of preparation, ages of climbing. Before life rose the mountain of the Lord; it must be scaled and its summit reached before man could put in an appearance. But the hour for which the whole cosmos had been travailing in pain could not be indefinitely delayed. In the fulness of time, as the tree bursts into bloom, as the tide rolls to the flood, as the light breaks

in through the gates of morning, nature came to her supreme expression in man. Man is not here on his own strength. He is not in the bosom of things unaccounted for. He is the child of nature; her last act, her highest product, the best that is in her power to bring forth, the son in whose wondrous being her own motherhood is to undergo total transformation.

That is the modern scientific conception; look for a moment at its greatness. Man as final issue of nature must turn round and look backward. He must look down the long line of life to the far-off first beginning. He must pass beyond the earliest forms in which the vital movement began to the mysterious, formless, eternal power behind all. And it is here that nature is lifted into a new character by her human product. In that eternal power there must be a reason to account for man's reason, conscience to account for his conscience, love to account for his love, spirit to explain his spirit. Nature as mother must become spirit to account for the soul of her son. The flower shows what was in the seed, the oak is the revelation of what was in the heart of the acorn; and man as the last and best outcome of nature is the authoritative expression of the power that is behind nature. Thus the mind that is the final product of nature discovers the mind that is the source of nature. Man seeking the origin

of his being finds it on the farther side of nature in One like unto a son of man. He learns later to distinguish between the reality and the image, between God and godlike man. And then a wireless telegraphy is established between them across the vast untraveled distances of nature. The life near to God can not send the tokens of His inmost character upward to man; the brute life near to man can not carry downward to God man's thoughts and hopes. The animal life that stretches in an expanse so wide between the Creator and His best work can not connect the human and the divine. But when the spirit to which nature comes in man has once seen the Spirit in which nature must begin, then the wireless telegraphy comes into play. The heart, that is the last product of life, sends out its mysterious currents, its aspirations, its gladness, its grief, and its hope; and these repeat themselves in the great heart of God. And forth from the Spirit behind nature issue the messages of recognition, of sympathy, of intimated ideals and endless incentive, that register themselves in the soul of man. Nature is a solid, sympathetic, and now and then glorified, and yet dumb, highway between God and man. Her beauty belongs to the Spirit that she does not know, and it speaks to the Spirit that is older than her child. She is a mute, unconscious sacrament between the infinite reason and the finite, a path for the lightning

that plays backward and forward between the soul of man and the soul of God. The great primal fact in the human environment is that man is the interpreter of nature. In this character of interpreter of nature he receives his first message from God, and makes his first response.

II. The second fact in the human situation is that religion is the interpreter of man. As man looks backward he beholds beyond nature a face like his own, only diviner; and ever afterward the noblest aspiration of his soul is to win the smile of that face and to escape its frown. Our self-comprehending Adam would confess that he knew himself only when he noted within him the lover of the infinite. And here history leads the way. You look into "The Book of the Dead," and you see what high and serious things religion meant for the early Egyptian. The pyramids are monuments to religion. The art of the ancient races was chiefly homage to the divine. The Athenian Parthenon would never have been but for faith in the goddess that shielded the city. Greek art, the greatest art in the world, is primarily a tribute to faith. Those marvelous statues were likenesses of the gods; those incomparable temples were dwelling-places for the gods. Religion is in the warp and woof of the world's love and sorrow, its art and literature, its patriotism and history. The life of man is the cathedral window, and re-

ligion is the colored figure that stands in it. The two are inseparable. You can not abolish the figure without breaking the window; you can not banish religion without destroying humanity. Try to explain Homer's world without Olympus; account for Mohammedanism and make no reference to faith; write the history of the Middle Ages and take no note of the "Divine Comedy"; sum up the meaning of Persian and Indian civilization and pay no heed to religion; show what Hebraism is and leave unnoticed its consciousness of God, and you will create a parallel to the philosopher who should endeavor to trace the significance of human life apart from man's passion for the infinite.

Here then is the key to manhood. He is a being over whom the unseen wields an endless fascination. There is in him a thirst that nothing can quench save the living God. His chief attribute is an attribute of wo, an incapacity for content within the limits of the visible and temporal. His differentiation from the brute is at this point absolute. Between man and the lower orders of life there is a line of likeness; there is also from the beginning a line of unlikeness. In physical structure man is both similar and dissimilar to the animal. As bread-winner and economist he is kindred and he is in contrast to the creatures below him. In the home, in society, and in the state in which both home and society

are set and protected, the line of likeness grows less and less distinct, while the line of unlikeness becomes bolder and plainer. It is impossible to deny observation to the dog and impossible to grant to it science. The instinct for beauty belongs to the bird, but art in the full sense of the word, as the self-conscious expression of beautiful ideas, is no part of its life. One can not decline to note method in the existence of the brute, and one is compelled to withold from it philosophy. In these higher activities the line of likeness between man and the animal is of the faintest description; while the line of contrast becomes more and more pronounced and significant. When we come to the summit of man the likeness vanishes utterly. Among the lower life of the world there is no *Magnificat*, there is no *Nunc Dimittis;* the beginning and the end do not link themselves to the Eternal. The brute has no religion, no temple, no priest, no Bible, no sacrament of love between itself and the invisible. The tower of this church tells at once, and from afar, that it is a church. Near at hand, much besides the tower tells the same story. There is the cruciform foundation; there is the structure of its walls. There is the outside with distinct note; there is the inside with its joyous beauty. Look at the church closely and you need no tower to proclaim what it is. And yet the tower is its most conspicuous witness: at a distance it is the

sole witness. Religion is similarly the eminent token that man belongs to a divine order. The basis of his being in sacrifice should repeat the same tale. Civilization as a struggle after social righteousness should announce the same fact. Man's thoughts and feelings, and their manifold and marvelous expression in art, in institutions, and in systems of opinion, utter the same testimony. And yet the tower of his being, high soaring and far seen, is his feeling for the invisible. You do not know man until you behold him worshiping.

III. The third fact in our human situation is that Christianity is the interpretation of religion. You see the devout old Jew, Simeon, who met Jesus as His mother brought Him for the first time into the temple; and there you behold the old faith interpreted by the new. All that was best in the Hebrew religion is conserved and carried higher in the Christian religion. Everywhere the devoutest Jews were conscious of wants which the national faith did not meet. They waited for the consolation of Israel, and when Christ came he supplied satisfactions which Hebraism could not supply. Christianity commended itself to the disciples of Christ because it seemed to be their own faith at its best. They were carried over into it by the logic of their previous belief and their deep human need. Paul sought righteousness as a Jew; when he became a Christian, righteousness was still his

great quest. And Christianity commended itself to him because the national ideal of righteousness was set before him in a sublimer form, and because a new inspiration came to him in his pursuit of it. The old immemorial goal of human endeavor was exalted, and the everlasting incentives were filled with the freshness of a divine life. Thus the religious Jew, when Christ came, was like a convalescent patient. The process of recovery was going on, but in a way that was discouragingly slow. The longing was for the higher altitudes of the spirit, for the pure and bracing atmosphere of some exalted leader, for an environment richer in healing ministry and in restoring power. That longing Christ met. He carried His believing countrymen on to the heights. He surrounded them with the freshness of His own spirit. He put over them a new sky. He took them into a new environment, rich with His truth and grace, tender with infinite sympathy, stored with the forces that work for spiritual vigor, filled with the love of His Father. Ask Peter or James or John or Paul, ask any believing Jew and he will tell you that Christianity is simply the consummation of his faith as a Jew.

The gospel moves along the same line of self-verification with reference to all the great religions. The Persian believes in eternal light, and he hates the contending darkness.

Christianity says that God is light, and that in Him is no darkness at all; that Jesus is the Light of the world, and that whosoever followeth Him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. The Greek was full of humanity, and he could not help making his gods and goddesses simply larger and more beautiful men and women. What is the soul of that amazingly beautiful and seemingly fantastic mythology of the Greeks? Why do they worship Apollo and Aphrodite, Hermes and Athene? Because they can think of nothing higher than ideal humanity. And Christ comes, the ideal man. The beauty of the Lord is upon Him. His thoughts and feelings and purpose and character are the most perfect things in the world. He identifies Himself with man, and He identifies Himself with God. He is the Son of man, and as such He is the Son of God. And thus a human God, a human universe, a human religion is offered to the Greek, and in place of the wonderful mythology the clear, warm, divine fact. The Mohammedan believes in will; and the gospel puts before him that ultimate irresistible Will as a Will to all good, eternally burdened with love, and nothing but love, for man. The Hindu is smitten with an endless craving after rest, and he thinks the path to peace lies in the diminution and final extinction of being. Christ goes to the Hindu and says: "Come unto me all ye that

are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

He sets before the Hindu an infinite social peace; he calls into play the moral will that for ages has been allowed to slumber. The goal is high social harmony; the path to it is the intelligent will in faithful, inspired, victorious obedience. The need of the Hindu is not less but more and better existence. The way out of his despair is through fulness of life. His misery is but the dumb prayer for eternal life, that is, for existence supreme in its character and in its volume.

Thus Christianity is everywhere the interpreter of religion. Everywhere it carries the world's faith to its best. It is the consummation both of the human need and the divine answer. And to-day, in our own world, it goes on the same high errand. The intuitions of righteousness, the sympathies with goodness, the wish for the more abundant life, the ideals and the struggles, the hope and the fear, without which man would not be man, find their interpreter in Christianity. It is the soul carried to the utmost depth of its need and the loftiest height of its desire, and then made conscious that below its profoundest weakness and above its highest dream is the infinite Love that is educating its life. It is

the best wisdom of history speaking to the highest interests of man. As mothers brought their children to Jesus that He might reveal the inmost meaning of childhood, open its treasure to the hearts that loved it, and by His consecrating touch assure it of perpetual increase; so are the nations bringing their religions to Him, and the noble among men their uncomprehended longing and hope. He walks among us still as the Revealer, the Conserver, and the Consummator of life.

IV. Lastly, Christianity finds it own interpretation in God. We have seen man looking backward and finding the origin of his soul in the Soul that is behind nature. We have seen his religion telling him that he can not live by bread alone, that he can rest only under the shelter of the unseen, that he is infinitely more akin to the invisible than to the visible, that he has a spirit and must therefore hunger for the fellowship of the eternal Spirit. We see Christianity lifting this religious capacity to its highest, and bringing in the divine appeal in its sublimest form. We behold the earth transfigured in this Christian dream, the ladder set that reaches from the dreamer to heaven, and upon it, going up and coming down, the great prayers of the soul and the tender responses of the Most High. To what shall we refer this sublime, transfiguring dream? Is it the delusion of the sleeper, or the whisper of God? Is the ladder

set up from the earth, or is it let down from above? Did man shape it out of his abysmal desire, or did God make and establish it out of His love What can we say of that which is the highest wisdom, the widest sympathy, the divinest love, and the mightiest power in human history? What can we do with that which is the true life of man? Can the trees of the field, as they clap their hands and sing in the freshening breeze, do other than refer it to heaven? And man, as he sees the light of Christ upon the Spirit behind nature, beholds in the gospel that which interprets his highest dreams, feels in Christianity the power to understand and to become his own best self—can he do other than say that his Christian faith is the gift of God? The star in the brook refers you for the explanation of its being to the star in the sky; and the glory of the gospel living in the depths of man's soul has no other origin than the love of God.

The hope of science lies in exploring the natural environment. All material reality is here, and here science has found all her truth, and every season reminds her that inexpressible wonders still wait her search. In the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth are hidden the treasure for which she is to toil. Earth and sea and sky; the waveless depths and the windless heights, and the wide expanse between, now sunlit and again stormswept, are the

field of her enterprise and hope. And in the same way the human environment is the region that the spirit must explore. The meaning of humanity must be found in and through humanity. "Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down; or who shall descend into the abyss? that is, to bring Christ up from the dead. The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart." The divine reality offers itself to faith in and through the scope and sweep of life. The order of God is in the life of society. The ideal for man, the method by which it is realized, and the power, are set in the spiritual tissues of the race. If you see no God, no soul, no genuine religion, believe rather that you are blind than that your human environment does not contain them. You are the product of nature. It follows that nature must be great enough to account for you and your race and the Christ who is your race at its best. Back of the nature that gave birth to you, that bore your kind, and brought forth Christ, there must be the sufficient Spirit. You are sure that you can not live by bread alone. You have thoughts that wander through eternity. You can not rest until you rest in God. You are a being made for religion, and again here is the gospel that meets your intelligence with its wisdom, your heart with its love, your will with its moral authority. Nothing puts your

being in tune, and nothing rings out the best music that is in you, as the gospel does. It is omnipresent in our civilization, working everywhere to crush the beast and to free the man. It is in a mother's love, the soul of its tenderness; it is in a father's heart as ideal and incentive. The history and the experience and the hope of our homes are transfigured in its light, as if the earth should repose in an everlasting evening glow. Patriotism is alive with its fire, and the new and growing passion for humanity is the great token of its quickening spirit. It is the box of ointment, very precious, which has been broken in society and all Christendom is filled with its perfume. Birth and death, love and sorrow, achievement and failure, human life and its immemorial content, the old room and the dear and dreary things in it, take on new dignity and grace. To detect the new spirit in the old dwelling is the best and most rewarding of all intuitions. To live in the human homestead consecrated by the diffusion of Christ's gospel is to undergo an unconscious conformation to exalted ideals. Because of our Christian civilization, behind every morning is the Father, who makes His sun to shine upon the evil and the good, and who sends His rain upon the just and the unjust. Nature has been lifted into a servant of the divine beneficence. And man's wild but imperishable passion for the unseen has been brought to

see its last and best self in the love of Christ. Wherever we look, this gospel is the master light of all our seeing; and once more, is it not light from heaven? We know where to look for the belt of Orion, and clear and grand as the stars that constitute it are the great saving truths which are set in the human sky. There is nothing arbitrary in this sublime faith, nothing that does not rise out of the human order, nothing that is a mere import from the world of fancy or wild belief. The faith is the translation of fact into thought and speech. The eyes of Christ pass over and through the order of the universe, and His vision is our faith. Man is the interpreter of nature; religion is the interpreter of man; Christianity is the interpreter of religion; and God the Father is the interpreter of Christianity.

DAWSON

CHRIST AMONG THE COMMON THINGS OF LIFE

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

WILLIAM JAMES DAWSON, Congregational preacher and evangelist, was born in Towcester, Northamptonshire, in 1854. He was educated at Kingswood School, Bath, and Didsbury College, Manchester. He has long been known as an author of originality and pure literary style. In 1906 he received the pastorate of Highbury Quadrant Congregational Church, London, and accepted an invitation to do general evangelistic work under the auspices of the National Council of the Congregational churches of the United States. He now resides in this country.

DAWSON

Born in 1854

CHRIST AMONG THE COMMON THINGS OF LIFE[1]

As soon then as they were come to land they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine.—John xxi., 9, 12.

I CAN not read these words without indulging for a moment in a reminiscence. Not long ago, in the early morning, while all the world slept, I stood beside the Sea of Tiberias, just as the morning mist lifted, and watched a single brown-sailed fishing-boat making for the shore, and the tired fishermen dragging their net to land. In that moment it seemed to me as if more than the morning mist lifted—twenty centuries seemed to melt like mist, and the last chapter of St. John's gospel seemed to enact itself before my eyes. For so vivid was the sense of something familiar in the scene, so mystic was the hour, that I should scarce have been surprized had I seen a fire of coals burning on the shore, and heard the voice of Jesus inviting these tired fishermen to come and dine.

Now if I felt that, if I was sensible of the haunting presence of Christ by that Galilean

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shore, how much more these disciples, in whose minds every aspect of the Galilean lake was connected with some intimate and thrilling memory of the ministry of Jesus.

Christ once more stands among the common things of life; the fire, the fish, the bread —all common things; a group of tired, hungry fishers—all common men; and He is there to affirm that in His resurrection He had not broken His bond with men, but strengthened it—wherever common life goes on there is Jesus still.

I. Notice the words with which the story opens, and you will see at once that this is the real clue to its interpretation. "When morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus." A strange thing that! Why did they not know Him? Because they were not looking for Him in such a scene. It had seemed a natural thing, if Jesus should appear at all, that He should appear in the garden, a vision of life at the very altar of death. It seemed yet more probable and appropriate that He should appear in the upper room, that room made sacred by holiest love and memory. If any words of Christ yet lingered in the mind and had power to thrill them, they were surely these words, "Ye shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven," glorified, triumphant, lifted far above the earth and its humble life. And so, if they were looking for

Christ at all that morning, I think they watched the morning clouds, expecting Him to come down the resplendent staircase of the sunbeams to call the nations together and vindicate Himself in acts of universal judgment. And behold! Jesus comes as a fisherman standing on the lakeside, busy over a little fire, where the morning meal is cooking; and behold! Jesus speaks, and it is not of the eternal mysteries of God, not of the solemn secrets of the grave, but of nets and fishing and how to cast the nets—the simple concerns of simple men engaged in humble tasks.

No wonder they did not recognize Him. Once more the Son of Man comes eating and drinking, and even the eyes that knew Him best can not see in this human figure by the lakeside the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth. They looked and saw but a fellow fisherman, cooking his meal upon the shore, and they knew not that it was Jesus.

II. Think for a moment of the earthly life of Christ, and you will see that it was designedly linked with all the common and even the commonest things of life.

If you or I could have conceived the great thought of some human creature that should be the very incarnation of God, what would have been the shape of our imaginings? Surely we should have chosen for this earthly temple of the Highest some human form per-

fected in grace and beauty by the long refinements of exalted ancestry; the child of kings or scholars; the delicate flower of life, in whom the elements were so subtly mixed that we should recognize them as special and miraculous—so we might think of God manifest in man. But God chooses for the habitation of His Spirit a peasant woman of Nazareth, humble, poor, unconsidered.

If we could have forecast the training of such a life, how should we have pictured it? Surely as sheltered from the coarseness of the world, delicately nourished, sedulously cultured; but God orders that this life should manifest itself in the house of the village carpenter, out of reach of schools, in a little wicked town, under the commonest conditions of poverty, obscurity, and toil.

If you and I could have imagined the introduction of this life of lives to the world, how should we picture that? Surely we should have pictured it coming with pomp and display that would at once have attracted all eyes; but God orders that it shall come without observation, unfolding its quiet beauty like the wayside flower, which there are few to see and very few to love. Commonness: that is the great note of the incarnation and the purposed feature of Christ's earthly life.

He reaffirms His fraternity in common life. The disciples could not imagine that as possible; nor can we. And why not? For two

reasons, one of which is that we have forgotten the dignity of common life.

1. Dignity is for us almost synonymous with some kind of separation from common life; it dwells in palaces, not in cottages; it inheres in culture, but is inconceivable in narrow knowledge; and to the great mass of men it is, alas! the attribute of wealth, of fine raiment, of social isolation. But we have not learned even the alphabet of Christ's gospel unless we have come to see that the only true *in*dignity in human life is sin, meanness, malevolence, and small-heartedness; and that all life is dignified where there are love, purity, and piety in it, whatever be its social category.

I read the other day that it is probable that the very mire of the London streets contains that mysterious substance known as radium, the most tremendous agent of light and heat ever yet discovered by man; so in man himself, however low his state, there is the spark of God, an ember lit at the altar fires of the Eternal, and it is because we forget this that we forget the dignity of common life. For we do forget it. We may make our boast that a single human soul is of more value than all the splendors and immensities of matter; but in our actions we treat the boast as a mere rhetorical expression. There is nothing so cheap as men and women—let the lords of commerce answer if it be not so. But Christ

acted as tho the boast were true. He deliberately inwove His life into all that is commonest in life. He has made it impossible for us, if indeed we have His spirit, to think of any salient aspect of human life without thinking of Him. Where childhood is, there is Bethlehem; where sorrow is, there is Gethsemane; where death is, there is Calvary; where the toiler is, there is the poor man of Nazareth; and where the beggar is, there is He who had no place where to lay His head. There is not a drop of blood of Christ, nor a throb of thought in our brains that is not thrilling with the impact of this divine life of lives. And so the true dignity of life is this, that Christ is in all men, faintly outlined it may be, defaced, half-obliterated, but there, and the Church that forgets this has neither impulse nor mandate for Christ's work among men.

2. And then, again, there is a second reason: we have not learned to look for Christ among the common things of life.

"Let us build three tabernacles," said the wondering disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration, and the speech betrayed a tendency of thought which was in time to prove fatal to the Church.

The Christ without a tabernacle, the free, familiar Christ of the lake or the wayside was everybody's Christ; but the moment Christ is shut up in a church or a tabernacle He

becomes the priest's Christ, the thinker's Christ, the devotee's Christ, but He ceases to be the people's Christ.

I remember five years ago standing in the great church of Assisi, which has been erected over and encloses the little humble chapel where Francis first received his call. You will scarcely be surprized if I confess that I turned with a sense of heart-sick indignation from the pomp of that splendid service in the gorgeous church to the thought of Francis, in his worn robe, going up and down these neighboring roads, touching the lepers, calling them "God's patients," pouring out his life for the poor; and I knew Christ nearer to me on the roads that Francis trod than in that church, which is his mausoleum rather than his monument. And as I felt that day in far-off Umbria, so I have felt to-day in England; my heart goes out to Catherine Booth, to Father Dolling, to these Christs of the wayside, and it turns more and more from the kind of Christ who lives in churches and nowhere else. My brethren, you will let me say that we do but make the church Christ's prison when we forget that all the realm of life is His. Oh, you good people, you do love your church, but often think and act as tho the presence of Christ can be found nowhere else. Lift up your eyes and see this risen Christ, a fisherman upon the shore, busy in no loftier task than to have a meal prepared

for hungry fishermen. Unlock your church doors, let Christ go out among common people; nay, go yourselves, for it is here that He would have you be. Remember that wherever there is toil, there is the Christ who toiled; and there you should be, with the kind glance, the warm hand-grasp, and the loving warmth of brotherhood.

Christ stands amid the common things of life; where the fire is lit, there is He; where the bread is broken, there is He; where the net of business gain is drawn, there is He; and only as we learn to see Him everywhere shall we understand the dignity and the divinity of human life.

III. "And Jesus said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes."

Here is another strange thing. Christ knows more about the management of their own business than they do. They had toiled all night and caught nothing; is not that a significant description of many human lives? "Children, have ye any meat?" asks that quiet Voice from the shore, and they answer "No." Is not that yet more pathetically significant? All the heartbreak and disappointment of the world cry aloud in that confession. Oh, I could fill an hour with the mere recital of the names of great and famous people who have toiled through a long life,

and as the last gray hour came over their dim sea of life, "brackish with the salt of human tears," have acknowledged with infinite bitterness that they have caught nothing. Listen to the voice of Goethe, "In all my seventy-five years I have not had four weeks of genuine well-being;" to the confession of our own famous poet,

> My life is in the yellow leaf,
> The flowers, the fruits of love are gone;
> The worm, the canker, and the grief
> Are mine alone.

to the ambitious and successful statesman who says, "Youth is folly, manhood is struggle, old age regret"; to one of our most brilliant women of genius in our own generation, wife of a still more brilliant husband, who cries, "I married for ambition, and I am miserable." Surely there is some tragic mismanagement of the great business of living here. Oh, brother, is it true of you, that after all the painful years happiness is not yours? You have no meat, no food on which the heart feeds, no green pasture in the soul, no table in the wilderness, and the last gray day draws near and will find you still hungering for what life has never given you.

Learn, then, that Christ knows more about the proper management of your life than you do. "Cast your net on the right side of the ship," speaks that quiet Voice from the shore

And you know what happened. And it is so still. Just because Christ stands among the common things of life, He knows most about life, and, above all, He knows where the golden fruit of happiness is found and where the secret wells of peace.

And to some of us whom God has called to be fishers of men the issue is yet more solemn. We have the boat and the nets, all this elaborate organization of the Church, but have we caught anything this year? Where is the draft of fishes? Where are the men and women saved by our triumphant effort? I will make my humble confession this morning, that for five-and-twenty years I have cast the net, but only lately have I found the right side of the ship; only lately have I discovered how easy it is to get the great draft of fishes by simply going to work in Christ's way. I do not believe in the indifference of the masses in religion; the indifference is not in the masses, but in the churches. You will never catch many fish if you stand upon the shore of cold respectability and wait for them to come; launch out into the deep and you will find them. Go for them—that is Christ's method. Compel them to come in, for remember Christ's ideal was, as Bishop Lightfoot so nobly put it, "the universal compulsion of the souls of men." And if your experience is like mine, you will find that there is strangely little compulsion needed to bring men and

women to Christ. I stood but lately in a house where fifty fallen women lived; I went there to rescue three of its unhappy inmates. When the moment came to take these three women from their life of sin, their comrades lined the passage to shake my hand; there were tears and prayers, and messages like these, "Be good. You'll be a good woman," "We wish we had your chance"; and these poor souls in their inferno wished me "a happy New-year." Compulsion! There was small need for compulsion there! I believe I could have rescued all of these fifty women at one stroke had I known where to take them. But to the shame of the Free Churches in London I confess that, with the exception of the Wesleyans and the Salvation Army, I do not know a single Free Church Rescue Home in London. And I put it to you this morning whether you can any longer tolerate that omission? I ask you whether you really want a great draft of fishes, for you can have them if you want them. Christ knows the business better than you do; and if you will come out of the cloister of the church and seek the people in His spirit, I promise you that very soon you will not be able to drag the net for the multitude of fishes.

IV. "And Jesus said unto them, Come and dine."

Dine on what? Not the fish which they had caught. They had caught one hundred and

fifty-three great fishes; but notice Christ's fire was kindled before they came. Christ's fish was already laid thereon, and all they had to do was to come and dine. It is all you have to do, all the churches have to do. Did not Christ so put it in the parable of the Great Supper?—"Come, for all things are ready." Is not the last word of Scripture the great invitation?—"The Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely." Many a church can not say to a hungry world, "Come and dine," because it will not let Christ prepare the meal. It will not live in His spirit, it has no real faith in His gospel, it does not understand that its true strength is not in elaborate organization or worship, but in simple reliance on His grace. And so there is the table covered with elaborate confections, which are not bread, and when it says, "Come and dine," men will not come, for they know that there is nothing there for them. Let Christ prepare the meal and all is different then. When He says, "Come and dine," there is "enough for each, enough for all, enough for evermore." And as Jesus spoke, I think there flashed upon the memory of these men the scene when Jesus fed the five thousand, and by that memory they knew their Jesus. No one else ever spoke like that, with such certainty and such authority. And the same Voice speaks even now to your

hunger-bitten soul, to your famished heart, "Come and dine."

V. "Then Jesus taketh bread and giveth them, and fish likewise."

There is no mistaking the act; it was a sacramental act. Here, upon the lake shore, without a church, without an altar, the true feast of the Lord was observed. For what does the Holy Supper, which is the bond and seal of the Church's fellowship, stand for, if it is not for this, the sanctification of the common life? Bread and wine, the commonest of all foods to an Oriental, are elements indeed, because they are necessary to the most elementary form of physical life, things used daily in the humblest home. By linking Himself imperishably with these commonest elements of life, Christ makes it impossible to forget Him. Once more the thought shines clear, Jesus among the common things of life.

And then there comes one last touch in the beautiful story. While these things happened, the day was breaking. Is there one of us long tossed on sunless seas of doubt, long conscious of failure and disappointment in life? Are there those of us whose sorrow lies deeper than that which is personal—sorrow over our failure in Christ's work, pain over a life's ministry for Christ that has known no victorious evangel? Turn your eyes from that barren sea to Him who stands upon the shore;

He shall yet make you a fisher of men. Turn your eyes from that bleak, dark sea of wasted effort where you have fared so ill; it is always dark till Jesus comes, it is always light when He has come. There is a new day breaking for the churches—a day of widespread evangelistic triumphs that shall eclipse all the greatest triumphs of the past, if we will but go back to Christ's school and learn of Him how to save the people. And to each of us He says to-day: "I am the living bread; I am the bread of life come down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever." "Come and dine." Will you come?

SMITH

ASSURANCE IN GOD

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

GEORGE ADAM SMITH, divine, educator and author, was born at Calcutta in 1856, and educated at New College, Edinburgh, Scotland. He is at present professor of Old Testament Language, Literature and Theology in the United Free Church College, Glasgow. He is author of "The Historical Geography of the Holy Land," "Jerusalem, the Topography, Economics and History from the Earliest Time to A.D. 70" (1908). He is generally regarded as one of the most gifted preachers of Scotland.

SMITH

Born in 1856

ASSURANCE IN GOD

Preserve me, O God.—Psalm xvi., 1.

THE psalmist lived in a period when belief in the reality of many gods was still strong, and when a man who would follow the one true God had to prefer to do so against the attractions of other deities and against the convictions of a great number of his fellow countrymen that these deities were living and powerful. That stage of religion is so distant from ourselves that we may imagine the psalmist's example to be of no practical value for our faith, yet in such an imagination we should be very much mistaken indeed, for, to begin with, consider how much you and I to-day owe to those believers who so many centuries ago rejected all the gods that offered themselves to the hearts of men except the true God, and who chose to cleave to Him alone with all that passionate loyalty which breathes through these verses. But for them you and I could not be standing where we are in religion to-day. As the eleventh of Hebrews reminds us, we are the spiritual heir of such believers. It is to their struggles and their faith and their victories

that we greatly owe it that we have been born into an atmosphere in which no religious belief is possible to us save in one God who is Spirit and Righteousness and all Truth.

That, then, was the great choice that the psalmist's faith was turning to—a choice that was no mere assent to a creed that had been fought for and established by previous generations of believers. It was the man's own proving of things unseen and his own preference of those against the crowd and a system of things seen, palpable, and very powerful in their attraction for the senses of humanity. But we are not to suppose that the rival deities, from which this man turned to the unseen God, were to his mind or to the mind of his day the heap of dead and ugly idols which we know them to be. They were not dead things that he could kick away with his feet that these believers had to reject when they sought the living God, but things which he and his contemporaries felt to be alive and powerful; powerful alike in their seduction and in their vengeance. They were believed to be identical, as you know, with the forces of nature; they were supposed to be indispensable to the welfare of the individual and of society, and they were fanatically supported at the time by the mass of this man's own countrymen; so that to break from them in those days meant to abandon ancient opinions and habits, to resist many pleasant

and natural temptations and to incur the hostility, as was believed, of the powers of nature, to break with customs and with rites that had fortified and consoled the individual heart for generations and been the support and sanction of society and of the state as well. Yet this man did it. From all that living crowd and system, from all those visible temptations and terrors he turned to the unseen, fully conscious of his danger, for he opens his Psalm with a great cry, "Preserve me, preserve me, O God!" but yet deliberately, and with all his heart: "I have said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord." I have no goodness, no happiness, that is outside Thee or outside the saints that are in the land, "the excellent in whom is all my delight." Here we touch another great characteristic of all true faith which is full of example to ourselves. It is remarkable how, when a man really turns to God, he turns to God's people as well, and how he includes them in the loyalty and in the devotion which he feels toward his Redeemer. His confidence and the sensitiveness of his faith in and toward God become almost an equal confidence and an equal sensitiveness toward his fellow believers. So it is throughout Scripture; you remember that other psalmist who tells us how he had been tempted to doubt God's providence and God's power to help the good man—"does God know and is there knowledge in the Most High?

Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain and washed my hands in innocency." The psalmist immediately adds: "If I had spoken thus, behold I had dealt treacherously with the generation of God's children." If I had spoken thus, denying God, I had dealt treacherously with the generation of God's children. Unbelief toward God meant to him treason toward God's people; and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews affirms the same double character of true faith when he emphasizes just these two points in the faith of Moses: "choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God," and "enduring as seeing Him who is invisible," and God Himself through Jesus Christ has accepted this partnership of His people in our loyalty—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me." I do not believe in the full faith of any man who does not extend the loyalty he professes to God to God's people as well, who does not feel as sensitive to his brethren on earth as he does to his Father in heaven, who does not practise piety toward the Church as he does toward her Head, or find in her fellowship and her service a joy and a gladness which is one with his deep joy in God, his Redeemer. Nay, is it not just in loving people who are still imperfect, often disappointing, and far from their ideal it may be, that in our relations to them we are to find the

greater proof and test of our religious faith? In these days such a duty is unfortunately more complicated than with the psalmist. The lines between God's Church and the world is not so clear as it was to him, and the Church is divided into many and often hostile factions. All the more it becomes the test of our religion if our hearts feel and rejoice in the fellowship of God's simpler and more needy and more devoted believers, however unattractive they may otherwise be.

Consider the way in which the psalmist reached this pure faith in God and in His people. A factor in the process was distaste for the ugly rites of idolatry—"Their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer." Idolatry always develops a loathsome ritual. Sometimes it is cruel and sometimes it is horribly unclean, but it always debases the worshiper's mind, confuses his conscience, and hampers his freedom and energy by the burdensome ceremonies it imposes upon them. Standing afar off from them as we do, and knowing that there is no heathen religion but has something good in it, we are apt to think that it does not in the least matter how crude or how material a nation's faith be if only it be faith in something more powerful than themselves, if it satisfy their consciences and have some influence in disciplining society and helping the individual to control himself. But you have only to see idolatry at work, and at work

with the habits of ages upon it, to recognize how terrible it can be in its identification of sheer filth and cruelty with the interests of religion, and how it at once demoralizes and paralyzes its adherents. To see it thus is to understand the passionate horror of these words: "Their drink-offering of blood will I not offer."

It is, however, no mere recoil from the immoral which started the spring of this psalmists's faith in God. That faith was formed on personal experience of God Himself. In simple but pregnant phrases the psalmist tells us how sure he has become, first, of God's providence in his life; secondly, of God's intimate communion with his soul. God, he says, had been everything in his life. One does not know whether the psalmist was a prosperous man or a poor one; the inference that he was prosperous and rich has sometimes been drawn, but wrongly drawn, from one of the verses of the Psalm. His indifference to that is clear, but what he did have he knew he had from God. God, he says, is all his happiness and all his strength—"The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot." Whether poor or prosperous he could say: "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." Now that assurance of divine leading is not analyzable, but we know that it does grow up solid and sure in the

experience of simple men who have put their trust in God, who have felt life to be a commission from Him and who have done their duty obeying His call. With such men "all things work together for good." Tho life about them shake and darken, they feel their own solidity and have light enough to read the future. Tho stript and stark, they feel the Lord Himself to be the portion of their inheritance and of their cup. The portion of my inheritance the Lord is, *i.e.*, the little bit of land that fell to each Israelite as his share in the promised inheritance of the nation. "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance," as we might say in our Scotch language, "The Lord is my croft and my cup," so they find in Him all the ground and the freedom they need to do their work, fulfil their relationships, and develop their manhood.

It is, however, with the psalmist's second reason for his faith we have most to do. "I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons." This man held close communion with God. Is it not great to find the testimony of a brother man coming down all through those ages, from that dim and distant past, clear and sure as to this, that he had God's counsel and that God kept communion with him? God had spoken to this man and shown him His will. Yes, he had received

what we call inspiration and revelation, and had proved the truth of these in his life. They had led and they had lifted him. Nor had they come to him as many men falsely suppose revelation and inspiration exclusively have come to mankind, by means, namely, that were extraordinary and miraculous. The psalmist tells us of no vision of angels, of no voice from heaven. The Lord had not appeared to him in dreams nor by any marvelous signs; on the other hand, he tells us simply that the divine counsel of which he was so sure, and which he passes on to us, came to him through the workings of his inner spiritual life. That is what he means by the emphatic statement "yea, my reins instruct me in the night seasons," which he adds parallel with the thought, "I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel." According to the primitive physiology of this man's nation and times, the reins of a man fulfil the same intellectual function which we, with our larger knowledge, know are discharged by the brain. This was how God's revelation came to this brother of ours, through the working of his mind and conscience, but it was in the night seasons that they worked, not in the day and in the sunshine, but in the night when a man is left to himself with only this advantage to his thought: that like the blind he is yet undistracted by the influences which are seen. When he lies down he thinks soberly and

quietly about himself and about life and about God, and about the great hidden future that is waiting for him. He was communing with God, who had made his brain and used it as an instrument of revelation. In these thoughts God was communing with man through his reason and through his conscience. You and I are always contrasting God's providence and His grace. We are always attempting to oppose reason and revelation; to this man they were one. God's great grace had come to him through God's own providence, and God's revelation was ministered to him through the reason with which he had endowed the creature He had made in His own image. This psalmist's chief and practical help to us men and women to-day is that he became sure of God not because of any miracle or supernatural sign, on his report of which we might be content indolently to rest our faith, but in God's own providence in his life and in God's quiet communion with him through the organs God Himself has created in every one of us. For all time, whether before or after Christ, these are the chief grounds and foundations of faith in God. So it was in the Old Testament—"stand in awe and sin not," "commune with your own heart upon your bed and be still," "be still and know that I am God." So with Christ, "for the kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation, but the kingdom of heaven is within you," and so with

Paul, "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, and if children then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, to the end that ye being rooted and grounded in love may come to apprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height and to know the love of Christ."

God's guidance of his life, first of all, produces in a man a great sense of stability. "I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved." He who has found God so careful of him, he whom God hath regarded as worth speaking to and counseling and disciplining, will be certain that he shall endure, provided he is sure of his own loyalty. The life so loved of God, so provided for, and in such close communion with the Eternal is not, can not be the creature of the day, and this assurance stands firm in face of even death and the horrible corruption of the body. The psalmist refuses to believe that he is to dwell in the horrible under-world forever—either himself or any of God's believers. "Thou must not, thou wilt not leave my soul in sheol, thou

must not, thou wilt not suffer thy loved ones to see the pit." To this man it is incredible, and our hearts bear witness to the truth if we have had any experience of God's blessing and guidance. To this man it is incredible that the life God has cared for and guided and spoken to and brought into such intimate communion with himself can find its end in death. Those whom God has loyally loved and who have loyally loved God—for this word badly translated "holy" in the psalms really has that actual significance—those whom God has loyally loved and who have loyally loved God shall never die. As He lives so shall they; they shall never be absent from His presence. Be the future unknown and unknowable, be we ourselves incapable of conceiving the processes by which this mortal shall put on immortality, or where heaven is, or what eternity can possibly be to those who have never lived outside time, yet that future is secure and its immortal character is indubitable—where God is there shall His servants be, and because He is there their life shall be peace and joy, and because He is eternal it shall last forevermore. That thought is the whole of the hope and argument. We are assured of the future life because we have known God, and as we have found Him to be true to us and proved ourselves true to Him.

GUNSAULUS

THE BIBLE VS. INFIDELITY

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

FRANK WAKELY GUNSAULUS was born at Chesterville, Ohio, in 1856. He graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1875. For some years he was pastor of Plymouth Church, Chicago, and since 1899 pastor of Central Church, Chicago. He is also president of the Armour Institute of Technology. He is a fascinating speaker, having a clear, resonant voice, and a dignified presence. His mind is a storehouse of the best literature, and his English style is noteworthy for its purity and richness. He is the author of several books and is in popular demand as a lecturer.

GUNSAULUS

Born in 1856

THE BIBLE VS. INFIDELITY[1]

There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification.—1 Cor. xiv., 10.

OURS is a voiceful era. Perhaps, as the ages come and go and man's life grows richer, its questions more restless for answer, its moral supports called upon to bear heavier interests of faith, its enterprises more often and searchingly compelled to defend themselves, the voices of time will be increasingly potent and worthy of his attention. A singularly suggestive collection of messages fills the air to-day, and all of these voices speak of one theme—the Bible.

Anarchy, which is always atheistic, holds its converse in the places of evil which this book's message would close forever; the foes of that civilization builded on its laws and stimulated by its hopes asks us to condemn it as worthy only of caricature, vituperation, and hate. Let us find a path of duty to-day, not refusing to listen to any of these voices, but asking that other voices also may help us to the truth.

[1] By permission of the Balch Publishing Company. Copyright, 1908, *Home Life.*

The preacher's message is a book called the Bible. That is only the literary form of his message—telling its history. Even that form, which is much less divine as paper and ink are less lofty in the scale than humanity, has worked wonders. To-day, the Bible offers the nineteenth-century infidel as testimony of the influence it has. It has force enough to make infidelity preach tearfully and well about man, woman, and child. Skepticism did not do so well until the Bible came. The Bible has furnished the eloquence of infidelity with such a man as Shakespeare to talk about; no student of literature could imagine Shakespeare without the Bible and the Bible's influence upon him as he created his dreams. It furnished an Abraham Lincoln for an orator to compare favorably with incomplete ideas of Almighty God; but it seems to have been unable to show the critic that Christian ideas of Almighty God made Lincoln so love the Lord's Prayer that he wanted a church builded with this as its creed. It would seem that any general denunciation or humorous caricature of a book which has worked such an amazing effect in literature as has the Bible would be tempered by some recognition of the fact that these other minds—poets, orators, sages, and scientists—have found illumination and help in its pages. Liberal Christianity will be intellectually broad. Certainly the greatest of modern pagans, Goethe,

will not be accused of favoritism toward the Bible, yet he said: "I esteem the gospels to be thoroughly genuine, for there shines forth from them the reflected splendor of a sublimity, proceeding from the person of Jesus Christ, of so divine a kind as only the divine could ever have manifested upon earth." The Earl of Rochester saw that the only liberalism which objects to the Bible, in its true uses, is the liberalism of licentiousness; and he left this saying: "A bad heart is the great argument against this holy book." And Faraday, weeping, said: "Why will people go astray when they have this blest book to guide them?"

If we turn to literature we encounter many such liberal thinkers as Theodore Parker, who calmly informs us: "This collection of books has taken such a hold upon the world as has no other. The literature of Greece, which goes up like incense from that land of temples and heroic deeds, has not half the influence of this book. It goes equally to the cottage of the plain man and the palace of the king. It is woven into the literature of the scholar and colors the talk of the street." That is the voice of the liberalism which includes rather than excludes.

These were men not of the band of evangelical Christian preachers, who are roughly classed as a set of persons unable to tell the truth about the Bible, for fear they may lose

their means of subsistence; these are men who know the true mission of the Bible. It is not to furnish a picture of life in the time of Moses such as life ought to be, a portrait of a David for the imitation of men, a statue of a warrior in a time of barbarism who shall command my obedience to his commands now, an idea of God wrought out in ignorance and darkness, which has no self-development within it. The mission of the Bible is to furnish a humanly written account of a people, just as human as we, in whom, by divine inspiration, the soul of truth so lived and worked as to develop, in gradual course, by laws, by hopes, by loves, by life, a living, and, at last, perfectly authoritative ideal of righteousness, but more than all a gradual growth of such moral power as would be commanding in the redeeming self-sacrifice and love of Jesus Christ. Every page of the Old Testament was only preparatory, as the thorny bush is preparatory for the rose. Christ is the end of the long, weary human history that leads to Him. If the laws of Sinai had been enough, there never would have been a Calvary. No one for a moment dreams that the God of nature could have brought forth such a fruit as the life and ideas of Jesus without a tree of such a history, a tree rooted in the ground, storm-twisted, gnarled, and valuable only for its fruit. We are not asked to eat the roots and bark and branches; only the

fruit has an appeal to us. Its appeal is to our hunger, its authority lies in the fact that it satisfies our hunger.

It has satisfied the hunger of men whose liberalism came from their being made liberally. Large and capacious souls of mighty yearnings are they. They stand in contrast with the puny critics who assert that the Bible fails to feed them, because they have never tasted its nourishment.

Liberal Christianity, separating itself from the dogmatism which would make Christianity a book religion, worshiping a literary idol rather than loving a human revelation of the divine, knows it is not an ignorant lot of men and women who have received most from the Bible and spoken most gratefully of its message. When we think of sending the Bible to barbarism, with the hope of creating in its stead civilization, we can look into the face of John Selden, one of the most illustrious of English lawyers, when he says: "I have surveyed most of the learning that is among the sons of men, yet at this moment I can recall nothing in them on which to rest my soul, save one from the sacred Scriptures, which rises much on my mind. It is this: 'The grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blest hope and the glorious

appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us unto himself, a peculiar people zealous of good works.'" Liberal religion must include Selden. We will not be deterred from giving the Bible to heathenism of any kind when we remember that Sir William Jones has left these words: "The Scriptures contain more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence than could be collected from all other books that were ever composed in any age or in any idiom." Liberal religion must be as broad as Sir William Jones.

This is a very needy world, and many are the institutions of evil that need to be changed for institutions of goodness. If we are to believe the eloquence of hopeless unbelief, we ourselves will only be the slaves of a fatalism which says that man is but a result of forces; that what we call crime is but a part of the necessary course of things, and that there is no such thing as moral responsibility. This makes all reform or efforts at staying the tide of evil useless. Oftentimes the heart of the man who has ceased to read his Bible gets the victory over this dreadful philosophy, and it is not remarkable that the skeptic becomes the exponent of freedom, charging like a host of war upon all institutions of slavery. Liberal theology puts its one hand on the dogmatist who tells him to accept literal in-

fallibility, and its other on the sincere lover of men who has lost his Bible entirely. And liberalism says: It is in just such moments that we trust our Bible the most, and we remember that William Wilberforce, who lifted the chains from the bondmen, has said: "I never knew happiness until I found Christ as a Savior. Read the Bible! Read the Bible! Through all my perplexities and distresses I never read any other book, I never knew the want of any other." We are certainly not despising the science which is worthy of a name, nor are we forgetting any proposition which has found a place in the world's thought, if we look into the face of Sir John Herschel, who tells us that "all human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more strongly the truths contained in the holy Scriptures." It is truly no part of wisdom for us to conclude that for scientific reasons we ought to forsake our Bible when Professor Dana avers: "The grand old book of God still stands; and this old earth, the more its leaves are turned and pondered, the more will it sustain and illustrate the sacred Word."

Surely it is not the hour dogmatically to withdraw this book, which has proved the basis of civilization. Professor Lyell, the great English geologist, tells us: "In the year 1806 the French Institute enumerated no less than eighty geological theories which were

hostile to the Scriptures, but not one of these theories is held to-day." Bacon's remark is still true: "There never was found in any age of the world either religion or law that did so highly exalt the public good as the Bible." And John Marshall and Prince Bismarck agree with Daniel Webster when he says: "If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible our country will go on prospering and to prosper; but if we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity." There is not an anarchist in America who does not clap his hands when he hears a Bible with the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount denounced. Indeed, the civilization in which we stand, as compared with the barbarism out of which we have been led by the Bible, would make William Henry Seward's assertion only a mild statement of the truth when he says: "The whole hope of human progress is suspended on the ever-growing influence of the Bible." I prefer lawyers like these to lead American public opinion. Part of the service of these men has been that they have shown theology that the Bible is not a set of texts on a dead level of authority and equal value, but the revealing, slow and sure, of an inspiration obeyed by a certain people in the realm of morals like that inspiration obeyed

by another people in the realm of art, and its test is: Does the Bible's ultimate message, its crowning commandment of Christ's life and love, produce goodness in morals? just as the test of the long revelation of beauty in his ancestors and the Greek is, does its ultimate commandment produce goodness in art.

Christianity does not ask: "What think ye of the Bible?" It asks: "What think ye of Christ?" There the throne is set, and so majestic is His glory that the moment we come into His presence we are judged. The Judge of the earth has taken His place in thought, history and hope. He is not on trial, and He asks no question as to what man thinks of the book which has enthroned Him in literature. The test is placed in my conduct and yours; each may say with Michael Bruce, who left these words on the fly-leaf of his Bible:

'Tis very vain of me to boast
How small a price this Bible cost;
The day of judgment will make clear
'Twas very cheap or very dear.

Shall we go forward with our Bible or backward without it? Infidelity has always forgotten that, so far as it has an eye for liberty and humanity, the Christianity not of sects but of the Bible has furnished it and trained it. The liberalism which puts its Bible aside will acknowledge that a Christless humanity culminated in Rome. Skepticism is often elo-

quent when it tries to show how much "fragments of Roman art" had to do with the making of modern civilization. Now, as Rome marks the height to which humanity without a Bible ascended, it would seem that this would be just the point where free and untrammeled thought and the fullest intellectual liberty would be found. Right there, where a Christless race was supreme, ought to be the place where the liberty abounded which the religion of Christ is said to destroy.

Whose program for the production of intellectual and spiritual liberty can liberals accept? Hoarse is the cry: The Bible is to be cast out. We look and behold men who have these opinions sitting on the throne of the Cæsars. Now, one would suppose the intellect of that whole realm would have fair play. There was no Bible there to fetter or to annoy. This ought to be the halcyon age for "the liberty of man, woman and child." These rulers have the same dignified abhorrence for all kinds of religion. The skeptic Lucretius says: "The fear of the lower world must be sent headlong forth. It poisons life to its lowest depths; it spreads over all things the blackness of death; it leaves no pleasure unalloyed." I match the Roman with the phrase of a recent orator of this school who spoke of the soldiers dead, as now "sleeping beneath the shadows of the clouds, careless alike of sunshine or of storm, each in the

windowless palace of rest." There was no window in the grave when more illustrious and original skeptics talked about it. Modern infidelity has many expressions on the future after death which sound like the old Roman distich, "I was not, and became; I was, and am no more."

Its orator, bending over the body of his dear brother, said nothing more touching than did Tacitus over the grave of Agricola, as he wrote: "If there is a place for the spirits of the pious; if, as the wise suppose, great souls do not become extinct with their bodies; if"—oh, that age of "if" ought to have been an age when every brain was free and no thought or sentiment were a chain. The Bible of Christianity was not powerful enough to throttle anybody. Its pages were not all written; its authors were hunted and outcast. Morals, too, ought to have been all right, for we are told that they are independent of God and Christ.

But what is the fact? Strangely enough, in that age, when nearly every monarch, or poet, or philosopher was a humorous skeptic and they had no Christian religion to "bind their hands," in an age when nothing but this sort of infidelity was supreme, Seneca, to whom connoisseurs in ethics blandly turn when they grow weary of the strenuous Paul or the pensive John, Seneca, while he wrote a book on poverty, has a fortune of $15,000,000, with

a house full of citrus tables made of veined wood brought from Mount Atlas. While he framed moral precepts which we are besought to substitute for the Sermon on the Mount, he was openly accused of constant and shameless iniquity, and was leading his distinguished and tender pupil, Nero, into those practises and preparing him for those atrocities which Seneca himself had upon his own soul while he wrote his book on clemency. At that hour the Bible Christianity offered to the world's heart and aspiration, not a book, not a theorist of morals, but a man for the leadership of humanity, and, of that Man the literary and calm French skeptic says: "Jesus will never be surpassed." In the age of Rome, when people were not burdened by churches or Bibles, Lucian says: "If any one loves wealth and is dazed by gold; if any one measures happiness by purple and power; if any one brought up among flatterers and slaves has never had a conception of liberty, frankness and truth; if any one has wholly surrendered himself to pleasure, full tables, carousals, lewdness, sorcery, and deceit, let him go to Rome."

There was no Bible either to preach against it or to interfere with it. These things were the product then, as they are now, of infidelity. Whenever the world wishes a civilization so barbarous as that, the reviler of the Bible must create it, for they have the applause of evil and the good-will of crime. In

the age of Rome, when this skepticism was the creed of the State, Nero got tired of the goddess Astarte, and murdered his own brother, his wife, and his mother, and the senate was so affected with the same opinion that they heard his justification and proceeded to heap new honors upon him. He threw the preacher Paul into jail, but there Paul wrought out the impulse of Europe. In the age when the great Livy said that "neglect of gods" had come, Caligula let loose his imperial frenzy, and every stream of blood that could be sent toward the sea carried its red tide. In that age when, like later eloquent critics, Ennius said that he did not believe that the gods thought of human beings, "for if the gods concerned themselves about the human race the good would prosper and the bad suffer," the courtesan was kept for pleasure and the wife for domestic slavery. In that happy age of unbelief, when Menander sung "the gods do not care for men," "the homes were," according to Juvenal, "broken up before the nuptial garland faded"; and according to Tertullian, "they married only to be divorced." Friends exchanged wives; infanticide and other hellish crimes were common. This is what that spirit, in its purity, did for the home, when there was no Bible to read at its hearthstone and no New Testament to put into the hands of young lovers departing to make a new rooftree.

Labor will some day be too liberal to give up its Bible. In that age, when "God was dead"; in that age, when "the gods had abdicated"; they said, "the mechanic's occupation is degrading. A workshop is incompatible with anything noble." The curse of slavery had blotted the name of labor, and they agreed that "a purchased laborer is better than a hired one," and thousands of prison-like dwellings rose to conceal the myriads of slaves. In that age Nero, who had the same opinion about God which the vaunting spirit which calls itself liberal has to-day, had a "golden house" as large as a city, with colonnades a mile long, and within it a statue of Nero 120 feet high. That is what the theory of infidelity did for labor and the working man when it was on the throne. Do you wonder that from that day to this the "carpenter's son" of the Bible has been scoffed at by this infidelity?

In that age, when the theories of infidelity ruled, the gladiators made wet with their blood the great enclosure of the arena. The women and timid girls of Rome gave lightly the sign of death. The crowd shook the building with applause as the palpitating body was dragged by a hook into the death-chamber, and slaves turned up the bloody soil and covered the blood-dabbled earth with sand that the awful amusement might go on. All this was allowed by infidelity in its purity,

before it had been influenced by the Christian's Bible into believing that such things are atrocious.

Oh, when I hear infidelity prate of the horrors of slavery and defend a Godless theory of the State, I remember that those who had it in its purity did not regard the slave as a man. When I read the story of slavery and hear an exponent of free thought say, "The doctrine that woman is a slave or serf of man —whether it comes from hell or heaven, from God or demon, from the golden streets of the New Jerusalem, or the very Sodom of perdition—is savagery pure and simple," I say, "That is so, but just that was the ruling idea when infidelity was on the throne of Rome." And only where the Bible has gone and triumphed has woman the privileges which are thus praised.

When I hear it said: "Slavery includes all other crimes. It is the joint product of the kidnaper, pirate, thief, murderer, and hypocrite. It degrades labor and corrupts leisure. To lacerate the naked back, to sell wives, to steal babes, to debauch your soul—this is slavery," I answer: "That is so," and I add that all these and a thousand other damnable features of slavery were seen in Rome when the whole Roman people felt and spoke about the message of the Bible just as your type of liberalism does to-day.

To all this wretched state of man what

offers came from Seneca, whom skepticism quotes as a moralist? Why, he said: "Admire only thyself"; and when he saw that a man must get out of himself, he said: "Give thyself to philosophy." Not philosophy, but the power of the Bible's Christ has lifted man upward to his highest life.

If ever anti-Christianity had a chance to show its beauty, it was when it was at its supreme strength, and when Christianity was a babe in the manger; and these are only suggestions of the hell it dug for man at Rome. You say that it was not what skepticism is at the present day, and I acknowledge that it is so. Why? Because nineteen centuries have rolled like waves of light between, and Christ has improved it in spite of itself. Never had the world so good a chance to see what almost absolute skepticism and unbelief could and would do for the liberty of the human soul as then. But when the thrones of Rome were occupied with men who held the same opinion of the Bible as he does to-day, what was the freedom of the race?

The scene all comes back. Here is a little, obscure set of poor people who follow the words and life of the son of a carpenter. They are powerful in nothing that Rome calls power. But Rome says that they shall not think that way. Celsus, from whom our less scholarly skepticism is ready to borrow arguments, was not enough for the new thought

in the arena of debate, and they cried for another arena. Let us remember that unbelief, in its purity at that date, was so offended at nothing as at the fact that the Church said: "Christian justice makes all equal who bear the name of man," and that Paul said: "There is neither bond nor free, but ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Nothing so offended the representative of free thought in that period as the fact that a rich Roman, in the time of Trajan, having become a Christian, presented freedom to his 1,250 slaves on an Easter day. And, in all that time, when poor Christians with the funds of the Church were privately buying the freedom of slaves, I do not find that a base liberalism believed in liberty. Neither did it believe in freedom of thought. It is the blossom of egotism; it has nothing to which it bows; it beholds no majesty to which it can look up. It is sublime self-conceit, and it has no hesitancy in telling the whole human race that at its grandest moments it has been wrong. This egotism dared to become active in Rome, and it asked the Christians, in the person of the Emperor, to worship him, and to strew incense about him. "I will honor the Emperor," said Theophilus, "not by worshiping him, but by praying for him." Such men as that infidelity kindly put to death. Around their quivering limbs the infidelity of that day made the fagots to flame, and it taught the

red tongues of cruel death to creep about their smoking bodies.

Men who believed that the Bible's influence was what infidelity says it is, made the funeral pyre for Polycarp, the populace bringing fuel for the fire, and while the flames made a glory of their lambent glare, he cried out: "Six and eighty years have I served him and he has done me nothing but good, and how could I curse him, my Lord and Savior. If you would know what I am, I tell you frankly, I am a Christian." He did his own thinking, and was brave enough to avow his opinion, for which hate of Christianity duly burned him. This was the way infidelity treated free speech. In that way it unchained the soul of Polycarp. Infidelity's idea of Christianity sent the martyrs of Numidia and Paulus out of the world while they were praying for their murderers. Who believed in freedom then? Infidelity's idea of the message of the Bible followed the Christian like a wild beast, and in the catacomb of Calixtus drew from the pursued soul the pathetic exclamation: "Oh, sorrowful times, when we can not even in caves escape our foes!" And all this was true, because they said, "Recompense to no man evil for evil"; "Pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you."

This spirit of hate has had at least one holiday at the expense of Christian faith. On the night of the 18th of July, 64, Rome was swept

with fire. Six days and nights it raged. Ruined was the world's metropolis and excited were the wo-stricken people. Nero, whose opinions of Christianity, by the way, were wonderfully like the orator's, was king, and the people suspected that this royal monster did it. Men told of how he exulted over the sea of flame as he watched it from the tower of Mæcenas; and whatever the truth of this may be, it is certain that for the rage of the people Nero must have a victim, and Tacitus tells us that he charged the Christians with the crime. Then opened in Rome the awful carnival of bloodshed that the orator never mentions, in which horrible modes of torture and excruciating methods of producing pain vied with each other in satisfying the demands of death. Women bound to raging bulls and dragged to death were not without the companionship of others who, in the evening, in Nero's garden, were coated with pitch, covered with tar, bound to stakes of pine, lighted with fire, and sent to run aflame with the hatred of Christianity. Through the crowd of sufferers a gentleman, who was ultra-liberal as the orator, drove about, fantastically attired as a charioteer, and the people were wild with delight. Domitian had the same ideas, and severe were his persecutions of the new heresy. This was the day on which infidelity was so full of the love of freedom that it cried: "The Christians to the lions!"

And so I might recount to you how for hundreds of years the Church found out how early and unchristianized infidelity loved freedom of thought. To a type of liberals, it has for years seemed a joy to go to the places in the old world and note how intolerant the Church has been. Now I suggest to any one that he go and visit some of the places where men who thought of Christianity as negativism thinks showed their faith and its fruits. Let him go to the Colosseum and ask the winds that moan over its ruins what they know of the history of infidelity. The winds will hush in that wreck of stupendous magnificence, and with an eloquence gathered from seventeen centuries they will tell him a story that will cause a flow of tears, for much of infidelity is of noble heart. They will tell him how the marble seats were crowded with thousands; again will sweep upward the shout of the excited throng; before him there will lie a half-dead Christian martyr, and near that pool of blood will stand a lion who has satiated his horrid thirst.

They will tell him how infidelity made that splendid place a temple of the furies, how it laughed and yelled and applauded, as it amused itself with that spectacle of horror. They will tell him how the underground passages served to keep and cage wild beasts, and how those who then hated Christianity starved the fierce lion until his eyes rolled in hot

hunger and his teeth were sharpened with its agony. They will tell him how the infidelity of that day put balls of fire on the backs of the lions, and how the madness of their passion was increased by scattering hated colors about, tearing the beasts with iron hooks and beating them with cruel whips. They will tell how the Christian was made to fight these infuriated beasts without weapons, while infidelity was frantic with applause. It said "no" to the torn body yonder, that was mangled and supplicating in blood for life. I would have him stand there until, in after years, in a nobler strain than that of Byron, he could say:

> And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon
> All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
> Which softened down the hoar austerity
> Of rugged desolation.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Till the place
> Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
> With silent worship of the great of old!
> The dead but sceptered sovereigns who still rule
> Our spirits from their urns.

So long as I know what this book has been and done, so long as man's history will not allow me to risk the interests of society with the infidelity which has so often demoralized it, so long will I yearn to get the Bible and its message to all men. It has been our world's

best book. With this book as inspiration and resource, William Tyndale and Miles Coverdale were so to continue and complete the task of The Venerable Bede and John Wyclif as to make an epoch in the history of that language to be used by Shakespeare and Burke—an era as distinct as that which Luther's Bible so soon should mark in the history of a language to be such a potent instrument in the hands of Goethe and Hegel. For this very act of heresy, Tyndale was to be called "a full-grown Wyclif," and Luther "the redeemer of his mother-tongue." With the Bible, Calvin was to conceive republics at Geneva, and Holbein to paint, in spite of the iconoclasm of the Reformation, the faces of Holy Mother and Saint, and in spite of the cruelty of the Church, scripturally conceived satires illustrating the sale of indulgences. With that book Gustavus Vasa was to protect and nurture the freedom of the land of flowing splendors, while Angelo was transcribing sacred scenes upon the Sistine vault or fixing them in stone. Reading this book, More was to die with a smile; Latimer, Cranmer, and Ridley to perish while illuminating with living torches, and the Anabaptist to arouse the sympathies of Christendom by his agonies. With this book in hand, Shakespeare was to write his plays; Raleigh was to die, knight, discoverer, thinker, statesman, martyr; Bacon to lay the foundation of

modern scientific research—three stars in the majestic constellation about Henry's daughter. With this Bible open before them the English nation would behold the Spanish Armada dashed to pieces upon the rocks, while Edmund Spenser mingled his delicious notes with the tumult of that awful wreck.

This book was to produce the edict of Nantes, while John of Barneveld would give new life to the command of William the Silent —"Level the dikes; give Holland back to the ocean, if need be," thus making preparation for the visit of the Mayflower pilgrims to Leyden or Delfthaven. Their eyes resting upon its pages, Selden and Pym were to go to prison, while Grotius dreamed of the rights of man in peace and war, and Guido and Rubens were painting the joys of the manger or the sorrows of Calvary. His hand resting upon this book, Oliver Cromwell would consolidate the hopes and convictions of Puritanism into a sword which should conquer at Nasby, Marston Moor and Dunbar, leave to the throne of Charles I. a headless corpse, and create, if only for an hour's prophecy, a commonwealth of unbending righteousness. With that volume in their homes, the Swede and the Huguenot, the Scotch-Irishman and the Quaker, the Dutchman and the freedom-loving cavalier, were to plan pilgrimages to the West, and establish new homes in America. With that book in the cabin of the *Mayflower,*

venerated and obeyed by sea-tossed exiles, was to be born a compact from which should spring a constitution and a government for the life of which all these nationalities should willingly bleed and struggle, under a conqueror who should rise from the soil of the cavaliers, and unsheath his sword in the colony of the Puritans.

Out of that Bible were to come the "Petition of Right," the national anthem of 1628, the "Grand Remonstrance," and "Paradise Lost." With it, Blake and Pascal should voyage heroically in diverse seas. In its influence Jeremy Taylor should write his "Liberty of Prophesying," Sir Matthew Hale his fearless replies, while Rembrandt was placing on canvas little Dutch children, with wooden shoes, crowding to the feet of a Jewish Messiah.

Its lines, breathing life, order, and freedom, would inspire John Bunyan's dream, Algernon Sidney's fatal republicanism, and Puffendorf's judicature. With them, William Penn would meet the Indian of the forest, and Fénelon, the philosopher, in his meditative solitude. Locke and Newton and Leibnitz would carry it with them in pathless fields of speculation, while Peter the Great was smiting an arrogant priest in Russia, and William was ascending the English throne. From its poetry Cowper, Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning would catch the divine afflatus;

from its statesmanship Burke, Romilly, and Bright would learn how to create and redeem institutions; from its melodies Handel, Bach, Mendelssohn, and Beethoven would write oratorios, masses, and symphonies; from its declaration of divine sympathy Wilberforce, Howard, and Florence Nightingale were to emancipate slaves, reform prisons, and mitigate the cruelties of war; from its prophecies Dante's hope of a united Italy was to be realized by Cavour, Garibaldi, and Victor Emmanuel. Looking upon the family Bible as he was dying, Andrew Jackson said: "That book, sir, is the rock on which the Republic rests"; and with her hand upon that book, Victoria, England's queen, was to sum up her history as a power amid the nations of the earth, when, replying to the question of an ambassador: "What is the secret of England's superiority among the nations?" she would say: "Go tell your prince that this is the secret of England's political greatness."

Beloved friends, when spurious liberalism, with all her literature, produces such a roll-call as this; when out of her pages I may see coming a nobler set of forces for the making of manhood, then, and only then, will I give up my Bible; then, and only then, will I cease to pray and labor that it may be given to all the world.

HILLIS

GOD THE UNWEARIED GUIDE

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

NEWELL DWIGHT HILLIS was born at Magnolia, Iowa, in 1858. He first became known as a preacher of the first rank during his pastorate over the large Presbyterian church in Evanston, Illinois. This reputation led to his being called to the Central Church, Chicago, in which he succeeded Dr. David Swing, and where from the first he attracted audiences completely filling one of the largest auditoriums in Chicago. In 1899 he was called to Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, to succeed Dr. Lyman Abbott in the pulpit made famous by the ministry of Henry Ward Beecher. By his strong personality and mental gifts he draws to his church a large and eager following. His best known books are "A Man's Value to Society," and "The Investment of Influence."

HILLIS

Born in 1858

GOD THE UNWEARIED GUIDE[1]

Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God, &c.—Isaiah xl., 1-31. *He shall not fail, nor be discouraged.*—xlii., 4.

THIS is an epic of the unwearied God, and the fainting strength of man. For splendor of imagery, for majesty and elevation, it is one of the supreme things in literature. Perhaps no other Scripture has exerted so profound an influence upon the world's leaders. Luther read it in the fortress of Salzburg, John Brown read it in the prison at Harper's Ferry. Webster made it the model of his eloquence, Wordsworth, Carlyle and a score of others refer to its influence upon their literary style, their thought and life. Like all the supreme things in eloquence, this chapter is a spark struck out of the fires of war and persecution. Its author was not simply an exile—he was a slave who had known the dungeon and the fetter. Bondage is hard, even for savages, naked, ignorant, and newly drawn from the jungle, but slavery is

[1] By permission of the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*. Copyright, 1905.

doubly hard for scholars and prophets, for Hebrew merchants and rulers.

This outburst of eloquence took its rise in a war of invasion. When the northern host swept southward, and overwhelmed Jerusalem, the onrushing wave was fretted with fire; later, when the wave of war retreated, it carried back the detritus of a ruined civilization. The story of the siege of Jerusalem, the assault upon its gates, the fall of the walls, all the horrors of famine and of pestilence, are given in the earlier chapters of this wonderful book. The homeward march of the Persian army was a kind of triumphal procession in which the Hebrew princes and leaders walked as captives. The king marched in the guise of a slave, with his eyes put out, followed by sullen princes, with bound hands, and unsubdued hearts. As slaves the Hebrews crossed the Euphrates at the very point where Xenophon crossed with his immortal ten thousand. In the land of bondage the exiles were planted, not in military prisons, but in gangs, working now in the fields, now in the streets of the city, and always under the scourge of soldiers. When thirty years had passed the forty thousand captives were scattered among the people, one brother in the palace, and another a slave in the fields. Soon their religion became only a memory, their language was all but forgotten, their old customs and manner of life were utterly gone.

But God raised up two gifted souls for just such an emergency as this. One youth, through sheer force of genius, climbed to the position of prime minister, while a young girl through her loveliness came to the king's palace. One day an emancipation proclamation went forth, from a king who had come to believe in the unseen God who loved justice, and would overwhelm oppression and wrong. The good news went forth on wings of the wind. Making ready for their return to their homeland, all the captives gathered on the outskirts of the desert. It was a piteous spectacle. The people were broken in health, their beauty marred, their weapon a staff, their garments the leather coat, their provisions pieces of moldy bread, and their path fifteen hundred miles of sands, across the desert. To such an end had come a disobedient and sinful generation!

In that hour, beholding these exiles and captives, a flood of emotions rushed over the poet; he saw those bound who should conquer; he saw that men were slaves who should be kings. Then, with a rush, an immeasurable longing shivers through him like a trumpet call. Oh, to save them! To perish for their saving! To die for their life, to be offered for them all! In an abandon of grief and sympathy, he began to speak to them in words of comfort and hope. At first these exiles, dumb with pain and grief, listened, but lis-

tened with no light quivering in the eye, and no hope flitting like sunshine across the face. Their yesterdays held bondage, blows and degradation; their to-morrow held only the desert and the return to a ruined land. Then the word of the Lord came upon the poet. What if the night winds did go mourning through the deserted streets of their capital! What if their language had decayed and their institutions had perished? What if the farmer's field was only a waste of thorns and thickets, and the towns become heaps and ruins! What if the king of Babylon and his army has trampled them under foot, as slaves trample the shellfish, crushing out the purple dye that lends rich color to a royal robe? "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people." Is the way long and through a desert? "Every valley shall be exalted, every mountain and hill shall be made low." Has slavery worn man's strength to nothingness until he is as weak as the broken reed and the withered grass? The spirit of the Lord will revive the grass, trampled down by the hoofs of war horses. Soon the bruised root shall redden into the rose and the fluted stem climb into the tree. And think you if God's winds can transform a spray and twig into a trunk fit for foundation of house or mast of ship, that eternal arms can not equip with strength the hand of patriot?

Is the Shepherd and Leader of His little

flock unequal to their guidance across the desert? "Behold the Lord will come with a strong arm; he shall feed his flock like a shepherd and he shall gather the lambs in his arms and carry them in his bosom." What! Man's hand unequal to the task of rebuilding Jerusalem? Hath not God pledged His strength to the worker, that God whose arm strikes out worlds as the smith strikes out sparks upon the anvil? Is not man's helper that God who dippeth up the seas in the hollow of His hand? Who weighs the mountains with scales and the hills in the balance? What! Thine enemies too strong for thee? Why, God looketh upon all the nations and enemies of the earth as but a drop in the bucket. He sendeth forth His breath, and the tribes disappear as dust is blown from the balance. Then the trumpet call shivered through these exiles. "Hast thou not known? Have the sons of the fathers never heard of the everlasting God, the Lord, Creator of the ends of the earth? Fainteth not, neither is weary!" Heavy is the task, but the Eternal giveth power and strength. Even tho young patriots and heroes faint and fall, they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. While fulfilling their task of rebuilding they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. Oh, what a word is this! What page in literature is comparable to it for

comfort! Wonderful the strength of the warrior! Mighty the influence of the statesman! All powerful seems the inventor, but greater still the poet who dwells above the clang and dust of time, with the world's secret trembling on his lips.

He needs no converse nor companionship,
In cold starlight, whence thou can not come,
The undelivered tidings in his breast,
Will not let him rest.
He who looks down upon the immemorable throng,
And binds the ages with a song.
And through the accents of our time,
There throbs the message of eternity.

And so the unwearied God comforted the fainting strength of man.

Primarily, this glorious outburst was addrest to the exiles as heads of families. The father's strength was broken and his children had been crusht and ground to earth. The ancient patrimony was gone; he had gathered his little ones in from the huts where slaves dwelt. He was leading his little band of pilgrims into a desert. But the prophet spoke to the exiles as to men who believed that the family was the great national institution. With us, the family is important, but with these Hebrew exiles the family was everything. For them the home was the spring from whence the mighty river rolled forth. The family was the headwaters of national, industrial, social and religious life. Every

father was revered as the architect of the family fortune. The first ambition of every young Hebrew was to found a family. Just as abroad, a patrician gentleman builds a baronial mansion, fills it with art treasures, hangs the shields and portraits of his ancestors upon the walls, hoping to hand the mansion forward to generations yet unborn, so every worthy Hebrew longed to found a noble family. How keen the anguish, therefore, of this exile in the desert! What a scene is that of the exiles upon the edge of the desert. Darkness is upon the land and the fire burns low into coals. Worn and exhausted, children are sleeping beside the mother. Here is an old man, lying apart, broken and bitter in spirit—one son stands forth a dim figure—looking down upon his aged parents, upon the wife of his bosom and upon his little children. Standing under the stars, he meditates his plans. How shall he care for these, when he returns to his ruined estate? In the event of death, what arm shall lift a shield above these little ones? What if sickness or death pounce upon a home as an eagle upon a dove, as wolves upon lambs, or as brigands descend from the mountains upon sleeping herdsmen!

Every founder of a family knows the agony of such an hour! We are in a world where men are never more than a few weeks from possible poverty and want; little wonder then that all men seek to provide for the future

of the home and the children. But to the exile standing in the darkness, with love that broods above his babes, there comes this word of comfort: God's solicitude for you and yours will not let Him slumber or sleep! God will lift up a highway for the feet of the little band of pilgrims. The eternal God shall be thy guide in the march through the desert. His pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night shall stand in the sky; He shall lead the flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the little ones in His arms, and carry the children in His bosom. And if the father fall on the march, the wings of the Eternal shall brood the babes that are left. His right arm shall be a sword and His left arm a shield. The eternal God fainteth not, neither is weary. Having time to care for the stars, and to lead them forth by name, He hath time and thought also for His children. What a word is this for the home! What comfort for all whose hearts turn toward their children! What a pledge to fathers for generations yet unborn! This truth arms every parent for any emergency. For God is round about every home as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, for bounty and protection.

But the sage was also thinking of men whose hopes were broken, and whose lives were baffled and beaten. These exiles, crossing the desert, might have claimed for them-

selves the poet's phrase, "Lo, henceforth I am a prisoner of hope." Like Dante, they might have cried, "For years my pillow by night has been wet with tears, and all day long have I held heartbreak at bay." For these whose glorious youth had been exhausted by bondage, life had run to its very dregs. Gone the days of glorious strength! Gone all the opportunities that belong to the era when the heart is young, the limitations of life had become severe! Environment often is a cage against whose iron bars the soul beats bloody wings in vain!

How many men are held back by one weak nerve, or organ! How many are shut in, and limited, and just fall short of supreme success because of an hereditary weakness, handed on by the fathers! How many made one mistake in youth in choosing the occupation and discovered the error when it was too late! How many erred in judgment in their youth, through one critical blunder, that has been irretrievable, and whose burden is henceforth lasht to the back! In such an hour of depression, Isaiah assembles the exiles, and exclaims, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people. Tho your young men faint and be weary, tho the strong utterly fail, yet God is the unwearied one; with his help thou shalt take thy burden, and mount up with wings as eagles; with his unwearied strength thou shalt run with thy load and not be weary,

and walk and not faint." For this is the experience of persecution and the reward of sorrow, bravely borne that the fainting strength of man is supplemented by the sure help of the unwearied God.

Therefore, in retrospect, exiles, prisoners, martyrs, who have believed in God seem fortunate. The endungeoned heroes often seem the children of careful good fortune and happiness. The saints, walking through the fire, stand forth as those who are dear unto God. How the point of view changes events. Kitto was deaf, and in his youth his deafness broke his heart, but because his ears were closed to the din of life, he became the great scholar of his time, and swept the treasures of the world into a single volume, an armory of intellectual weapons. Fawcett was blind, but through that blindness became a great analytic student, a master of organization, and served all England in her commerce. John Bright was broken-hearted, standing above the bier, but Richard Cobden called him from his sorrow to become a voice for the poor, to plead the cause of the opprest, and bring about the Corn Laws for the hungry workers in the factories and shops. Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people.

Let the exile say unto himself: "Your warfare is accomplished; your iniquity is pardoned; the Lord's hand will give unto thee double for all thy sins that are for-

given." The great faiths and convictions of the prophets and law-givers, your language and your laws and your liberties, have not been destroyed by captivity; rather slavery has saved them. At last you know their value; in contrast with the idolatry of the Euphrates, the jargon of tongues, the inequality of rights, the organization of justice and oppression, how wonderful the equity of the laws of Moses! How beautiful the faith of the fathers! How surely founded the laws of God. Henceforth idolatry, injustice and sin became as monstrous in their ugliness as they were wicked in their essence. Everything else might go, but not the faith of the fathers. Persecution was like fire on the vase; it burned the colors in. Little wonder that the tradition tells us that for the next hundred years, at stated periods, all the people in the land came together, while a reader repeated this chapter on the unwearied God and the fainting strength of man that had recovered unto hope, men whose hopes had been baffled and beaten.

The thought of an unwearied God is also the true antidote to despondency. The ground of optimism is in God. When that great thinker described certain people as without God and without hope, there was sure logic in his phrase, for the Godless man is always the hopeless man. Between no God anywhere and the one God who is everywhere, there is no

middle ground. Either we are children, buffeted about by fate and circumstances, with events tossing souls about in an eternal game of battledore and shuttlecock, or else the world is our Father's house, and God standeth within the shadow, keeping watch above His own. For the man who believes in God, who allies himself to nature, who makes the universe his partner, there is no defeat, and no death, and no interruption of his prosperity. Concede that there is a God, and it follows as a logical necessity that He will not permit any enemy to ruin your life and His plans. For a man who holds this faith it follows that there can be no defeat, or failure. Indeed, the essential difference between men is the difference in their relation toward God. Here are the biographies of two great men. Both are men of genius, both are marvelously equipped, but their end was, oh, how different. One is Martin Luther, who stood forth alone, affirming his religious freedom, in the face of enemies and devils thick as the tiles on the roofs of the houses. The few friends Luther had shut him up in a fortress to save his life, but Luther mightily believed in God. With the full consent of his marvelous gifts, he surrendered his life to the will of God. Knowing that his days were as brief as the withering grass, he allied himself with the Eternal. In his discouragement he read these words, "The Everlasting

God fainteth not, neither is weary." In that hour Martin Luther shouted for joy. The beetling walls of the fortress were as tho they were not. Victorious he went forth, in thought, ranging throughout all Germany. And going out, he went up and down the land telling the people that God would protect him, and soon Germany was free.

Goethe tells us that Luther was the architect of modern German language and literature, and stamped himself into the whole national life. The Germany of the Kaiser is simply Martin Luther written large in fifty millions of men. But what made Luther? There was some hidden energy and spirit within him! What was this spirit in him? The spirit of beauty turned a lump of mud into that Grecian face about which Keats wrote his poem. The spirit of truth changes a little ink into a beautiful song. The spirit of strength and beauty in an architect changes a pile of bricks into a house or cathedral or gallery. And the thought of our unwearied God changed the collier's son into the great German emancipator. But over against this man, who never knew despondency, after his vision hour, stands another German. He, too, was a philosopher, clothed with ample power, and blest with oportunity. But he did evil in his life, and then the heart lost its faith, and hope utterly perished. The more he loved pleasure and pursued self, the more

cynical and bitter he became. Pessimism set a cold, hard stamp upon his face, and marred his beauty. Cynicism lies like a black mark across his pages. At last, in his bitterness, the philosopher tells us the whole universe is a mirage, and that yonder summer-making sun is a bubble that repeats its iridescent tints in the colors of the rainbow. Despair ate out his heart. He became the most miserable of men, and knew no freedom from sorrow and pain. And lo, now the man's philosophy has perished like a bubble, his influence has utterly disappeared, for his books are unread, while only an occasional scholar chances upon his name, tho the great summer-making sun still shines on and Luther's eternal God fainteth not, neither is weary.

Are you weak, oh, patriot? Remember God is strong. Do your days of service seem short, until your life is scarcely longer than the flower that blooms to-day and is gone to-morrow? God is eternal, and He will take care of your work. Are you sick with hope long deferred? Hope thou in God; He shall yet send succor. Have troubles driven happiness from thee, as the hawk drives the young lark or nightingale from its nest? Return unto thy rest, troubled heart, for the Lord will deal bountifully with thee. Are you anxious for your children? God will bring the child back from the far country. For the child hath wandered far, the golden

thread spun in a mother's heart is an unbroken thread that will draw him home! For things that distress you to-day, you shall thank God to-morrow. Nothing shall break the golden chain that binds you to God's throne. Are you hopeless and despondent because of your fainting strength? Remember that the antidote for despondency is the thought of the unwearied God, who is doing the best He can for you, and whose ceaseless care neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Little wonder therefore that God became all and in all to this feeble band of captives, journeying across the desert back to their ruined life and land. God had taken away earthly things from them, that He might be their all and in all. When the earth is made poor for us, sometimes the heavens become rich. God closed the eyes of Milton to the beauty in land and sea and sky, that he might see the companies of angels marching and countermarching on the hills of God. He closed the ears of Beethoven, that he might hear the music of St. Cecilia falling over heaven's battlements. He gave Isaiah a slave's hut, that he might ponder the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. How is it that this prophet and poet has become companion of the great ones of the earth? At the time Isaiah rebelled against his bondage, but when it was all over, and the fitful fever had passed, and the fleshly fetters had

fallen, he smiled at the things that once alarmed him, as he recalled his fainting strength and the unwearied God.

Gone—that ancient capital. Babylon is a heap. Jerusalem a ruin! But this epic of the unwearied Guide still lives! Isaiah, can never die! Can a chapter die that has cheered the exile in his loneliness, that has comforted the soldier upon his bivouac, that has braced the martyr for his execution, that has given songs at midnight to the prisoners in the dungeon? Out of suffering and captivity came this song of rest and hope. At last the poet praised the eternal God for his bonds and his imprisonment. Oh, it is darkness that makes the morning light so welcome to the weary watcher. It is hunger that makes bread sweet. It is pain and sickness that gives value to the physician and his medicine. It is business trouble that makes you honor your lawyer and counselor, and it is the sense of need that makes God near.

Are there any merchants here who are despondent? Remember the eternal God and make your appeal to the future. Are there any parents whose children have wandered far? When they are old, the children will return to the path of faith and obedience. Are there any in whom the immortal hope burns low? The smoking flax He will not quench, but will fan the flame into victory. Look up to-day; be comforted once more.

HILLIS

Work henceforth in hope. Live like a prince. Scatter sunshine. Let your atmosphere be happiness. If troubles come, let them be the dark background that shall throw your hope and faith into bolder relief. God hath set His heart upon you to deliver you. Tho your hand faint, and the tool fall, the eternal God fainteth not, neither is weary. He will bring thy judgment unto victory, immortalize thy good deeds, and crown thy career with everlasting renown.

JEFFERSON

THE RECONCILIATION

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON was born at Cambridge, Ohio, in 1860. He came to public attention by the effectiveness of his preaching during a most successful pastorate in Chelsea, Mass., from which he was called to the Broadway Tabernacle, New York, in 1897. During his New York pastorate the Tabernacle at 34th Street has been sold and a unique structure, including an apartment tower ten stories high, has been built farther up-town. Dr. Jefferson has published several successful books. He has a mellow, sympathetic voice, of considerable range and flexibility, and he speaks in an easy, conversational style.

JEFFERSON

Born in 1860

THE RECONCILIATION[1]

Christ died for our sins.—1 Cor. xv., 3.

I WANT to think with you this morning about the doctrine of the Atonement. Having used that word atonement once, I now wish to drop it. It is not a New Testament word, and is apt to lead one into confusion. You will not find it in your New Testament at all, providing you use the Revised Version. It is found in the King James Version only once, and that is in the fifth chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans; but a few years ago, when the revisers went to work, they rubbed out the word and would allow it no place whatever in the entire New Testament. They substituted for it a better word—reconciliation—and that is the word that will probably be used in the future theology of the Church. It is my purpose, then, this morning, to think with you about the doctrine of the reconciliation, or, to put it in a way that will be intelligible to all the boys and girls,

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I want to think with you about the "making up" between God and man.

Christianity is distinctly a religion of redemption. Its fundamental purpose is to recover men from the guilt and power of sin. All of its history and its teachings must be studied in the light of that dominating purpose. We are told sometimes that Jesus was a great teacher, and so He was, but the apostles never gloried in that fact. We are constantly reminded that He was a great reformer, and so He was, but Peter and John and Paul seemed to be altogether unconscious of that fact. It is asserted that He was a great philanthropist, a man intensely interested in the bodies and the homes of men, and so of course He was, but the New Testament does not seem to care for that. It has often been declared that He was a great martyr, a man who laid down His life in devotion to the truth, and so He was and so He did, but the Bible never looks at Him from that standpoint or regards Him in that light. It refuses to enroll Him among the teachers or reformers or philanthropists or the martyrs of our race. According to the apostolic writers, Jesus is the world's Redeemer, He was manifested to take away sin. He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. The vast and awful fact that broke the apostles' hearts and sent them out into the world to baptize the nations into His name,

was the fact which Paul was all the time asserting, "He died for our sins."

No one can read the New Testament without seeing that its central and most conspicuous fact is the death of Jesus. Take, for instance, the gospels, and you will find that over one-quarter of their pages are devoted to the story of His death. Very strange is this indeed, if Jesus was nothing but an illustrious teacher. A thousand interesting events of His career are passed over, a thousand discourses are never mentioned, in order that there may be abundant room for the telling of His death. Or take the letters which make up the last half of the New Testament; in these letters there is scarcely a quotation from the lips of Jesus. Strange indeed is this if Jesus is only the world's greatest teacher. The letters seem to ignore that He was a teacher or reformer, but every letter is soaked in the pathos of His death. There must be a deep and providential reason for all this. The character of the gospels and the letters must have been due to something that Jesus said or that the Holy Spirit inbreathed. A study of the New Testament will convince us that Jesus had trained His disciples to see in His sufferings and death the climax of God's crowning revelation to the world. The key-note of the whole gospel story is struck by John the Baptist in his bold declaration, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." In

that declaration there was a reference to His death, for the "lamb" in Palestine lived only to be slain. As soon as Jesus began His public career He began to refer in enigmatic phrases to His death. He did not declare His death openly, but the thought of it was wrapt up inside of all He said. Nicodemus comes to Him at night to have a talk with Him about His work, and among other things, Jesus says, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so shall the Son of man be lifted up." Nicodemus did not know what He meant—we know. He goes into the temple and drives out the men who have made it a den of thieves, and when an angry mob surrounds Him He calmly says, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." They did not know what He meant—we know. He goes into the city of Capernaum, and is surrounded by a great crowd who seem to be eager to know the way of life. He begins to talk to them about the bread that comes down from heaven, and among other things He says, "The bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." They did not understand what He said—we understand it now. One day in the city of Jerusalem He utters a great discourse upon the good shepherd. "I am the good shepherd," He says; "the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." They did not understand Him—we do. In the last week of His earthly life

it was reported that a company of Greeks had come to see Him. He falls at once into a thoughtful mood, and when at last He speaks it is to say that "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." The men standing by did not understand what He said—we understand. All along His journey, from the Jordan to the cross, He dropt such expressions as this: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." Men did not know what He was saying—it is all clear now.

But while He did not talk openly to the world about His death, He did not hesitate to speak about it to His nearest friends. As soon as He found a man willing to confess that He was indeed the world's Messiah, the Son of the living God, He began to initiate His disciples into the deeper mysteries of His mission. "From that time," Matthew says, "he began to show, to unfold, to set forth the fact that he must suffer many things and be killed." Peter tried to check Him in this disclosure, but Jesus could not be checked. It is surprising how many times it is stated in the gospels that Jesus told His disciples He must be killed. Matthew says that while they were traveling in Galilee, on a certain day when the disciples were much elated over the marvelous things which He was doing, He took them aside and said "Let these words sink into your ears: I am going to Jerusalem

to be killed." Later on, when they were going through Perea, Jesus took them aside and said, "The Son of man must suffer many things, and at last be put to death." On nearing Jerusalem His disciples became impatient for a disclosure of His power and glory. He began to tell them about the grace of humility. "The Son of man," He said, "is come, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." On the last Tuesday of His earthly life He sat with His disciples on the slope of the Mount of Olives, and in the midst of His high and solemn teaching He said, "It is only two days now until I shall be crucified." And on the last Thursday of His life, on the evening of His betrayal, He took His disciples into an upper room, and taking the bread and blessing it, He gave it to these men, saying, "This is my body which is given for you." Likewise after supper He took the cup, and when He had blest it gave it to them, saying, "This is my blood of the covenant which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins. Do this in remembrance of me." It would seem from this that the one thing which Jesus was desirous that all His followers should remember was the fact that He had laid down His life for them. One can not read the gospels without feeling that he is being borne steadily and irresistibly toward the cross.

When we get out of the gospels into the

epistles we find ourselves face to face with the same tragic and glorious fact. Peter's first letter is not a theological treatise. He is not writing a dissertation on the person of Christ, or attempting to give any interpretation of the death of Jesus; he is dealing with very practical matters. He exhorts the Christians who are discouraged and downhearted to hold up their heads and to be brave. It is interesting to see how again and again he puts the cross behind them in order to keep them from slipping back. "Endure," he says, "because Christ suffered for us. Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree." The Christians of that day had been overtaken by furious persecution. They were suffering all sorts of hardships and disappointments. But "suffer," he says, "because Christ has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." Certainly the gospel, according to St. Peter, was: Christ died for our sins.

Read the first letter of St. John, and everywhere it breathes the same spirit which we have found in the gospels and in St. Peter. John punctuates almost every paragraph with some reference to the cross. In the first chapter he is talking about sin. "The blood of Jesus Christ," he says, "cleanses us from all sins." In the second chapter he is talking about forgiveness, and this leads him to think at once of Jesus Christ, the righteous,

"who is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but for the sins of the whole world." In the third chapter he is talking about brotherly love. He is urging the members of the Church to lay down their lives, one for another, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." In the fourth chapter he tells of the great mystery of Christ's love: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." To the beloved disciple evidently the great fact of the Christian revelation is that Christ died for our sins.

But it is in the letters of Paul that we find the fullest and most emphatic assertion of this transcendent fact. It will not be possible for me to quote to you even a half of what he said on the subject. If you should cut out of his letters all the references to the cross, you would leave his letters in tatters. Listen to him as he talks to his converts in Corinth: "First of all I delivered unto you that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins." That was the foremost fact, to be stated in every letter and to be unfolded in every sermon. To Saul of Tarsus, Jesus is not an illustrious Rabbi whose sentences are to be treasured up and repeated to listening congregations; He is everywhere and always the world's Redeemer. And throughout all of Paul's epistles one hears the same jubilant,

triumphant declaration, "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Let us now turn to the last book of the New Testament, the Book of the Revelation. What does this prophet on the Isle of Patmos see and hear, as he looks out into future ages and coming worlds? The book begins with a doxology: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever." John looks, and beholds a great company of the redeemed. He asks who these are, and the reply comes back, "These are they who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." He listens, and the song that goes up from the throats of the redeemed is, "Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain and didst purchase us for God with thy blood." At the center of the great vision which bursts upon the soul of the exiled apostle, there is a Lamb that was slain. Whatever we may think of Jesus of Nazareth, there is no question concerning what the men who wrote the New Testament thought. To the men who wrote the book, Jesus was not a Socrates or a Seneca, a Martin Luther or an Abraham Lincoln. His life was not an incident in the process of evolution, His death was not an episode in the dark and dreadful tragedy of human history. His life is God's

greatest gift to men, His death is the climax and the crowning revelation of the heart of the eternal. You can not open the New Testament anywhere without the idea flying into your face, "Christ died for our sins."

How different all this is from the atmosphere of the modern Church. When you go into the average church to-day, what great idea meets you? Do you find yourselves face to face with the fact that Christ died for our sins? I do not think you will often hear that great truth preached. In all probability you will hear a sermon dealing with the domestic graces, or with business obligations, or with political duties and complications. You may hear a sermon on city missions, or on foreign missions; you may hear a man dealing with some great evil, or pointing out some alarming danger, or discussing some interesting social problem, or urging upon men's consciences the performance of some duty. It is not often in these modern days that you will hear a sermon dealing with the thought that set the apostles blazing and turned the world upside down. And right there, I think, lies one of the causes of the weaknesses of the modern Church. We have been so busy attending to the things that ought to be done, we have had no time to feed the springs that keep alive these mighty hopes which make us Christian men. What is the secret of the strength of the Roman Catholic Church? How

is it that she pursues her conquering way, in spite of stupidities and blunders that would have killed any other institution? I know the explanations that are usually offered, but it seems to me they are far from adequate. Somebody says, But the Roman Catholic Church does not hold any but the ignorant. That is not true. It may be true of certain localities in America, but it is not true of the nations across the sea. In Europe she holds entire nations in the hollow of her hand; not only the ignorant, but the learned; not only the low, but the high; not only the rude, but the cultured, the noble, and the mighty. It will not do to say that the Roman Catholic Church holds nobody but the ignorant. But even if it were true, it would still be interesting to ascertain how she exercises such an influence over the minds and hearts of ignorant people—for ignorant people are the hardest of all to hold. When you say that the Church can hold ignorant men, you are giving her the very highest compliment, for you are acknowledging that she is in the possession of a power which demands an explanation. The very fact that she is able to bring out such hosts of wage-earning men and women in the early hours of Sunday morning, men and women who have worked hard through the week, and many of them far into the night, but who are willing on the Lord's Day to wend their way to the house of God and en-

gage in religious worship, is a phenomenon which is worth thinking about. How does the Roman Catholic Church do it? Somebody says she does it all by appealing to men's fears, she scares men into penitence and devotion. Do you think that that is a fair explanation? I do not think so. I can conceive how she might frighten people for one generation, or for two, but I can not conceive how she could frighten a dozen generations. One would suppose that the spell would wear off by and by. There is a deeper explanation than that. The explanation is to be found in the spiritual nature of man. The Roman Catholic leaders, notwithstanding their blunders and their awful sins, have always seen that the central fact of the Christian revelation is the death of Jesus, and around that fact they have organized all their worship. Roman Catholics go to mass; what is the mass? It is the celebration of the Lord's Supper. What is the Lord's Supper? It is the ceremony that proclaims our Lord's death until He comes. The hosts of worshipers that fill our streets in the early Sunday morning hours are not going to church to hear some man discuss an interesting problem, nor are they going to listen to a few singers sing; they are going to celebrate once more the death of the Savior of the world. In all her cathedrals Catholicism places the stations of the cross, that they may tell to the eye the

story of the stages of His dying. On all her altars she keeps the crucifix. Before the eyes of every faithful Catholic that crucifix is held until his eyes close in death. A Catholic goes out of the world thinking of Jesus crucified. So long as a Church holds on to that great fact, she will have a grip on human minds and hearts that can not be broken. The cross, as St. Paul said, a stumbling-block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks, is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. The Catholic Church has picked up the fact of Jesus' death and held it aloft like a burning torch. Around the torch she has thrown all sorts of dark philosophies, but through the philosophies the light has streamed into the hearts and homes of millions of God's children.

Protestantism has prospered just in proportion as she has kept the cross at the forefront of all her preaching. The missionaries bring back the same report from every field, that it is the story of Jesus' death that opens the hearts of the pagan world. Every now and then a denomination has started, determined to get rid of the cross of Jesus, or at least to pay scant attention to it, and in every case these denominations have been at the end of the third or fourth generation either decaying or dead. There is no interpretation of the Christian religion that has in it redeeming power which ignores or belittles the death of Christ.

If Protestantism to-day is not doing what it ought to do, and is manifesting symptoms which are alarming to Christian leaders, it is because she has in these recent years been engaged so largely in practical duties as to forget to drink inspiration from the great doctrines which must forever furnish life and strength and hope. If you will allow me to prophesy this morning, I predict that the preaching of the next fifty years will be far more doctrinal than the preaching of the last fifty years has been. I imagine some of you will shudder at that. You say you do not like doctrinal preaching, you want preaching that is practical. Well, pray, what is practical preaching? Practical preaching is preaching that accomplishes the object for which preaching is done, and the primary object of all Christian preaching is to reconcile men to God. The experience of 1900 years proves that it is only doctrinal preaching that reconciles the heart to God. If, then, you really want practical preaching, the only preaching that is deserving the name is preaching that deals with the great Christian doctrines. But somebody says, I do not like doctrinal preaching. A great many people have said that within recent years. I do not believe they mean what they say. They are not expressing with accuracy what is in their mind. They do like doctrinal preaching if they are intelligent, faithful Christians, for doctrinal

preaching is bread to hearts that have been born again. When people say they do not like doctrinal preaching, they often mean that they do not like preaching which belongs to the eighteenth or seventeenth or sixteenth centuries. They are not to be blamed for this. There is nothing that gets stale so soon as preaching. We can not live upon the preaching of a bygone age. If preachers bring out the interpretations and phraseology which were current a hundred years ago, people must of necessity say, "Oh, please do not give us that, we do not like such doctrinal preaching." But doctrinal preaching need not be antiquated or belated, it may be fresh, it may be couched in the language in which men were born, it may use for its illustrations the images and figures and analogies which are uppermost in men's imagination. And whenever it does this there is no preaching which is so thrilling and uplifting and mighty as the preaching which deals with the great fundamental doctrines.

In one sense, the Christian religion never changes, in another sense it is changing all the time. The facts of Christianity never change, the interpretations of those facts alter from age to age. It is with religion as it is with the stars, the stars never change. They move in their orbits in our night sky as they moved in the night sky of Abraham when he left his old Chaldean home. The constellations were

the same at the opening of our century as they were when David watched his flocks on the old Judean hills. But the interpretations of the stars have always changed, must always change. Pick up the old charts which the astrologers made and compare them with the charts of astronomers of our day. How vast the difference! Listen to our astronomers talk about the magnitudes and distances and composition of the stars, and compare with their story that which was written in the astronomy of a few centuries ago. The stellar universe has not changed, but men's conceptions have changed amazingly. The facts of the human body do not change. Our heart beats as the heart of Homer beat, our blood flows as the blood of Julius Cæsar flowed, our muscles and nerves live and die as the nerves and muscles have lived and died in the bodies of men in all the generations—and yet, how the theories of medicine have been altered from time to time. A doctor does not want to hear a medical lecturer speak who persists in using the phraseology and conceptions which were accepted by the medical science of fifty years ago. Conceptions become too narrow to fit the growing mind of the world, and when once outgrown they must be thrown aside. As it is in science, so it is in religion. The facts of Christianity never change, they are fixt stars in the firmament of moral truth. Forever and forever it will be true that Christ

died for our sins, but the interpretations of this fact must be determined by the intelligence of the age. Men will never be content with simple facts, they must go behind them to find out an explanation of them. Man is a rational being, he must think, he will not sit down calmly in front of a fact and be content with looking it in the face, he will go behind it and ask how came it to be and what are its relations to other facts. That is what man has always been doing with the facts of the Christian revelation, he has been going behind them and bringing out interpretations which will account for them. The interpretations are good for a little while, and then they are outgrown and cast aside.

A good illustration of the progressive nature of theology is found in the doctrine of the atonement. All of the apostles taught distinctly that Christ died for our sins. The early Christians did not attempt to go behind that fact, but by and by men began to attempt explanations. In the second century a man by the name of Irenæus seized upon the word "ransom" in the sentence, "The Son of man is come to give his life a ransom for many," and found in that word "ransom" the key-word of the whole problem. The explanation of Irenæus was taken up in the third century by a distinguished preacher, Origen. And in the fourth century the teaching of Origen was elaborated by Gregory of Nyssa.

According to the interpretation of these men, Jesus was the price paid for the redemption of men. Paul frequently used the word redemption, and the word had definite meanings to people who lived in the first four centuries of the Christian era. If Christ was indeed a ransom, the question naturally arose, who paid the price? The answer was, God. A ransom must be paid to somebody—to whom was this ransom paid? The answer was, the devil. According to Origen and to Gregory, God paid the devil the life of Jesus in order that the devil might let humanity go free. The devil, by deceit, had tricked man, and man had become his slave—God now plays a trick upon the devil, and by offering him the life of Jesus, secures the release of man. That was the interpretation held by many theologians for almost a thousand years, but in the eleventh century there arose a man who was not satisfied with the old interpretation. The world had outgrown it. To many it seemed ridiculous, to some it seemed blasphemous. There was an Italian by the name of Anselm who was an earnest student of the Scriptures, and he seized upon the word "debt" as the key-word of the problem. He wrote a book, one of the epoch-making books of Christendom, which he called "*Cur Deus Homo.*" In this book Anselm elaborated his interpretation of the reconciliation. "Sin," he said, "is debt, and sin against an infinite being is an

infinite debt. A finite being can not pay an infinite debt, hence an infinite being must become man in order that the debt may be paid. The Son of God, therefore, assumes the form of man, and by his sufferings on the cross pays the debt which allows humanity to go free." The interpretation was an advance upon that of Origen and Gregory, but it was not final. It was repudiated by men of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and finally, in the day of the Reformation, it was either modified or cast away altogether.

Martin Luther, Calvin, and the other reformers seized upon the word "propitiation," and made that the starting-point of their interpretation. According to these men, God is a great governor and man has broken the divine law—transgressors must be punished—if the man who breaks the law is not punished, somebody else must be punished in his stead. The Son of God, therefore, comes to earth to suffer in His person the punishment that rightly belongs to sinners. He is not guilty, but the sins of humanity are imputed to Him, and God wreaks upon Him the penalty which rightfully should have fallen on the heads of sinners. That is known as "the penal substitution theory."

It was not altogether satisfactory, many men revolted from it, and in the seventeenth century a Dutchman, Hugo Grotius, a

lawyer, brought forth another interpretation, which is known in theology as "the governmental theory." He would not admit that Christ was punished. His sufferings were not penal, but illustrative. "God is the moral governor," said Grotius, "his government must be maintained, law can not be broken with impunity. Unless sin is punished the dignity of God's government would be destroyed. Therefore, that man may see how hot is God's displeasure against sin, Christ comes into the world and suffers the consequences of the transgressions of the race. The cross is an exhibition of what God thinks of sin." That governmental theory was carried into England and became the established doctrine of the English Church for almost three hundred years. It was carried across the ocean and became the dominant theory in the New Haven school of theologians, as represented by Jonathan Edwards, Dwight, and Taylor. The Princeton school of theology still clung to the penal substitution theory, and it was the clashing of the New Haven school and the Princeton school which caused such a commotion in the Presbyterian Church of sixty years ago. They are antiquated. They are too little. They seem mechanical, artificial, trivial. We can say of the governmental theory what Dr. Hodge said, "It degrades the work of Christ to the level of a governmental contrivance." If I should attempt to preach

to you the governmental theory as it was preached by theologians fifty years ago, you would not be interested in it. There is nothing in you that would respond to it. You would simply say, "I do not like doctrinal preaching." Or if I should go back and take up the penal substitution theory in all its nakedness and hideousness, and attempt to give it to you as the correct interpretation of the gospel, you would rise up in open rebellion and say, "We will not listen to such preaching." If I should go back and take up the Anselmic theory and attempt to show how an infinite debt must be paid by infinite suffering, you would say: "Stop, you are converting God into a Shylock, who is demanding His pound of flesh. We prefer to think of Him as our heavenly Father." If I should go further back and take up the old ransom theory of Origen and Gregory, I suspect that some of you would want to laugh. You could not accept an interpretation which represents God as playing a trick upon Satan in order to get humanity out of his grasp. No, those theories have all been outgrown. We have come out into larger and grander times. We have higher conceptions of the Almighty than the ancients ever had. We see far deeper into the Christian revelation than Martin Luther or John Calvin ever saw. These old interpretations are simply husks, and men and women will not listen to the preaching of them. If,

now and then, a belated preacher attempts to preach them, the people say, "If that is doctrinal preaching, please give us something practical."

And so the Church is to-day slowly working out a new interpretation of the great fact that Christ died for our sins. The interpretation has not yet been completed, and will not be for many years. I should like this morning simply to outline in a general way some of the more prominent features of the new interpretation. The Holy Ghost is at work. He is taking the things of Christ and showing them unto us. The interpretation of the reconciliation of the future will be superior in every point to any of the interpretations of the past.

The new interpretation is going to be simple, straightforward, and natural. The death of Christ is not going to be made something artificial, mechanical, or theatrical. It is going to be the natural conception of the outflowing life of God.

The new interpretation is going to start from the Fatherhood of God. The old theories were all born in the counting-room, or the court-house. Jesus went into the house to find His illustrations for the conduct of the heavenly Father. He never went into the court-house, nor can we go there for analogies with which to image forth His dealings with our race. It was His custom to say, "If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto

your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him."

The new interpretation is going to be comprehensive. It is going to be built, not on a single metaphor, but on everything that Jesus and the apostles said. Right there is where the old interpretations went astray. They seized upon one figure of speech and made that the determining factor in the entire interpretation. Jesus said many things, and so did His apostles, and all of them must contribute to the final interpretation.

Two things are to be hereafter made very clear: The first is that God reveals Himself in Jesus Christ. The old views were always losing sight of that great fact. There was always a dualism between God and Christ. I remember what my conception was when I was a boy. I thought that God was a strict and solemn and awful king, who was very angry because men had broken His law. He was just, and His justice had no mercy in it. Christ, His Son, was much better-natured and more compassionate, and He came forth into our world to suffer upon the cross that God's justice might relax a little, and His heart be opened to forgive our race. I supposed that that was the teaching of the New Testament, it certainly was the teaching of the hymns in the hymn-book, if not of the preachers. And when I became a young man, I supposed that

that was the teaching of the Christian religion. My heart rebelled against it. I would not accept it. I became an infidel. A man can not accept an interpretation of God that does not appeal to the best that is in him. No man can accept a doctrine that darkens his moral sense, or that confuses the distinction between right and wrong. I would not accept the old interpretation because my soul rose in revolt against it. I shall never forget how, one evening in his study, a minister, who had outgrown the old traditions, explained to me the meaning of the reconciliation. He assured me that God is love, invisible, eternal. Christ, His Son, is also love. In becoming at one with the Son we become at one with the Father. This is the at-one-ment. And when that truth broke upon me my heart began to sing:

> Just as I am—Thy love unknown
> Hath broken every barrier down;
> Now, to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
> O Lamb of God, I come!

I wonder in telling this if I have not spoken the experience of many of you this morning. It is impossible to love God if we feel that He is stern and despotic, and must be appeased by the sufferings of an innocent man. The New Testament nowhere lends any support to that idea. Everywhere the New Testament assures us that God is the lover of men, that He

initiates the movement for man's redemption. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. . . ." "Herein is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us." "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "The Father spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "I and my Father are one." These are only a few of the passages in which we are told that God is our Savior. When an old Scotchman once heard the text announced, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," he exclaimed, "Oh, that was love indeed! I could have given myself, but I never could have given my boy." This, then, is the very highest love of which it is possible for the human mind to think: the love of a father that surrenders his son to sufferings and death.

And this brings us to the second great truth which is outgrowing increasingly clear in the consciousness of the Church. The death of Jesus is the revelation of an experience in the heart of God. God is the sin-bearer of the world. He bears our sins on His mind and heart. There are three conceptions of God: the savage, the pagan, and the Christian. God, according to the savage conception, is vengeful, and capricious, and vindictive. He is a great savage hidden in the sky. We have all outgrown that. According to the pagan idea,

He is indifferent to the wants and woes of men. He does not care for men. He is not interested in them. He does not sympathize with them. He does not suffer over their griefs. He does not feel pain or sorrow. I am afraid that many of us have never gotten beyond the pagan conception of the Almighty. But according to the Christian conception, God suffers. He feels, and because He feels, He sympathizes, and because He sympathizes, He suffers. He feels both pain and grief. He carries a wound in His heart. We men and women sometimes feel burdened because of the sin we see around us; shall not the heavenly Father be as sensitive and responsive as we men? But somebody says that God can not be happy then. Of course he can not be happy. Happiness is not an adjective to apply to God. Happy is a word that belongs to children. Children are happy, grown people never are. One can be happy when the birds are singing and the dew is on the grass, and there is no cloud in all the sky, and the crape has not yet hung at the door. But after we have passed over the days of childhood, there is happiness no longer. Some of us have lived too long and borne too much ever to be happy any more. But it is possible for us to be blest. We may pass into the very blessedness of God. The highest form of blessedness is suffering for those we love, and shall not the Father of all men have in His

own eternal heart that experience which we confess to be the highest form of blessedness? This is the truth which is dawning like a new revelation on the Church: the humanity of God. It is revealed in the New Testament, but as yet we have only begun to take it in. God is like us men. We are like Him. We are made in His image. We are His children, and He is our Father. If we are His children, then we are His heirs, and joint heirs with Christ. Not only our joys, but our sorrows also, are intimations and suggestions of experiences in the infinite heart of the Eternal.

MORGAN

THE PERFECT IDEAL OF LIFE

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

GEORGE CAMPBELL MORGAN, Congregational divine and preacher, was born in Tetbury, Gloucestershire, England, in 1863, and was educated at the Douglas School, Cheltenham. He worked as a lay-mission preacher for the two years ending 1888, and was ordained to the ministry in the following year, when he took charge of the Congregational Church at Stones, Staffordshire. After occupying the pulpit in several pastorates, in 1904 he became pastor of the Westminster Congregational Chapel, Buckingham Gate, London, a position which he still occupies. Besides being highly successful as a pulpit orator, Dr. Morgan has published many works of a religious character, among which may be enumerated: "Discipleship"; "The Hidden Years of Nazareth"; "Life's Problems"; "The Ten Commandments." His last work, "The Christ of To-day," has passed through several editions.

MORGAN

Born in 1863

THE PERFECT IDEAL OF LIFE

Jesus therefore said, When ye have lifted up the son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself, but as the Father taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me; he hath not left me alone; for I do always the things that are pleasing to him. As he spake these things, many believed on him.—John viii., 28-30.

THE Master, you will see, in this verse lays before us three things. First of all, He gives us the perfect ideal of human life in a short phrase, and that comes at the end, "the things that please him." Those are the things that create perfect human life, living in the realm of which man realizes perfectly all the possibilities of his wondrous being—"the things that please him." So I say, in this phrase, the Master reveals to us the perfect ideal of our lives. Then, in the second place, the Master lays claim—one of the most stupendous claims that He ever made—that He utterly, absolutely, realizes that ideal. He says, "I do always the things that please him." And then, thirdly, we have the revelation of the secret by which He has been

able to realize the ideal, to make the abstract concrete, to bring down the fair vision of divine purpose to the level of actual human life and experience, and the secret is declared in the opening words: "He that sent me is with me; my Father hath not left me alone."

The perfect ideal for my life, then, is that I live always in the realm of the things that please God; and the secret by which I may do so is here unfolded—by living in perpetual, unbroken communion with God: communion with which I do not permit anything to interfere. Then it shall be possible for me to pass into this high realm of actual realization.

It is important that we should remind ourselves in a few sentences that the Lord has indeed stated the highest possible ideal for human life in these words: "The things that please him." Oh, the godlessness of men! The godlessness that is to be found on every hand! The godlessness of the men and women that are called by the name of God! How tragic, how sad, how awful it is! because godlessness is always not merely an act of rebellion against God, but a falling short in our own lives of their highest and most glorious possibilities.

Here is my life. Now, the highest realm for me is the realm where all my thoughts, and all my deeds, and all my methods, and everything in my life please God. That is the highest realm, because God only knows what

I am; only perfectly understands the possibilities of my nature, and all the great reaches of my being. You remember those lines that Tennyson sang—very beautifully, I always think:

> Flower in the crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of the crannies;—
> Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
> Little Flower—but if I could understand
> What you art, root and all, and all in all,
> I should know what God and man is.

Beautiful confession! Absolutely true. I hold that flower in my hand, and I look at it, flower and leaves and stem and root. I can botanize it, and then I tear it to pieces—that is what the botanist mostly does—and you put some part of it there, and some part of it there, and some part of it there. There is the root, there the stem, and there are the leaves, and there is everything; but where is the flower? Gone. How did it go? When did it go? Why, when you ruthlessly tore it to bits. But how did you destroy it? You interfered with the principle that made it what it was—you interfered with the principle of life. What is life? No man can tell you. "If I could but know what you are, little flower, root and all, and all in all," I would know what life is, what God is, what man is. I can not.

Now, if you lift that little parable of the

flower into the highest realm of animal life, and speak of yourself—we don't know ourselves; down in my nature there are reaches that I have not fathomed yet. They are coming up every day. What a blest thing it is to have the Master at hand, to hand them over to Him as they come up, and say, "Lord, here is another piece of Thy territory; govern it; I don't know anything about it." But there is the business. I don't know myself, but God knows me, understands all the complex relationships of my life, knows how matter affects mind, and physical and mental and spiritual are blended in one in the high ideal of humanity. Oh, remember, man is the crowning and most glorious work of God of which we know anything as yet. And God only knows man.

But here is a Man that stands amid His enemies, and He looks out upon His enemies, and He says, "I do the things that please him"—not "I teach them," not "I dream them," not "I have seen them in a fair vision," but "I do them." There never was a bigger claim from the lips of the Master than that: "I do always the things that please him."

You would not thank me to insult your Christian experience, upon whatever level you live it, by attempting to define that statement of Christ. History has vindicated it. We believe it with all our hearts—that He always

did the things that pleased God. But I have got on to a level that I can touch now. The great ideal has come from the air to the earth. The fair vision has become concrete in a Man. Now, I want to see that Man; and if I see that Man I shall see in Him a revelation of what God's purpose is for men, and I shall see, therefore, a revelation of what the highest possibility of life is. Now this is a tempting theme. It is a temptation to begin to contrast Him with popular ideals of life. I want to see Him; I want, if I can, to catch the notes of the music that make up the perfect harmony which was the dropping of a song out of God's heaven upon man's earth, that man might catch the key-note of it and make music in his own life. What are the things in this Man's life? He says: "I have realized the ideal—I do." There are four things that I want to say about Him, four notes in the music of His life.

First, spirituality. That is one of the words that needs redeeming from abuse. He was the embodiment of the spiritual ideal in life. He was spiritual in the high, true, full, broad, blest sense of that word.

It may be well for a moment to note what spirituality did not mean in the life of Jesus Christ. It did not mean asceticism. During all the years of His ministry, during all the years of His teaching, you never find a single instance in which Jesus Christ made a whip of cords to scourge Himself. And all that

business of scourging oneself—an attempt to elevate the spirit by the ruin of the actual flesh—is absolutely opposed to His view of life. Jesus Christ did not deny Himself. The fact of His life was this—that He touched everything familiarly. He went into all the relationship of life. He went to the widow. He took up the children and held them in His arms, and looked into their eyes till heaven was poured in as He looked. He didn't go and get behind walls somewhere. He didn't get away and say: "Now, if I am going to get pure I shall do it by shutting men out." You remember what the Pharisees said of Him once. They said: "This man receiveth sinners." You know how they said it. They meant to say: "We did hope that we should make something out of this new man, but we are quite disappointed. He receives sinners."

And what did they mean? They meant what you have so often said: "You can't touch pitch without being defiled." But this Man sat down with the publican and He didn't take on any defilement from the publican. On the other hand, He gave the publican His purity in the life of Jesus Christ. Things worked the other way. He was the great negative of God to the very law of evil that you have—evil contaminates good. If you will put on a plate one apple that is getting bad among twelve others that are pure, the bad one will influence the others. Christ

came to drive back every force of disease and every force of evil by this strong purity of His own person, and He said: "I will go among the bad and make them good." That is what He was doing the whole way through. So His spirituality was not asceticism. And if you are going to be so spiritual that you see no beauty in the flowers and hear no music in the song of the birds; if the life which you pass into when you consent to the crucifixion of self does not open to you the very gates of God, and make the singing of the birds and the blossoming of the flowers infinitely more beautiful, you have never seen Jesus yet.

What was His spirituality? The spirituality of Jesus Christ was a concrete realization of a great truth which He laid down in His own beatitudes. What was that? "Blest are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Now, the trouble is we have been lifting all the good things of God and putting them in heaven. And I don't wonder that you sing:

> My willing soul would stay
> In such a frame as this,
> And sit and sing itself away
> To everlasting bliss.

No wonder you want to sing yourself away to everlasting bliss, because everything that is worth having you have put up there. But Jesus said: "Blest are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." If you are pure you

will see Him everywhere—in the flower that blooms, in the march of history, in the sorrows of men, above the darkness of the darkest cloud; and you will know that God is in the field when He is most invisible.

Second, subjection. The next note in the music of His life is His absolute subjection to God. You can very often tell the great philosophies which are governing human lives by the little catchwords that slip off men's tongues: "Well, I thank God I am my own master." That is your trouble, man. It is because you are your own master that you are in danger of hell. A man says: "Can't I do as I like with my own?" You have got no "own" to do what you like with. It is because men have forgotten the covenant of God, the kingship of God, that we have all the wreckage and ruin that blights this poor earth of ours. Here is the Man who never forgot it.

Did you notice those wonderful words: "I do nothing of myself, but as my Father taught me, I speak." He neither did nor spoke anything of Himself. It was a wonderful life. He stood forevermore between the next moment and heaven. And the Father's voice said, "Do this," and He said "Amen, I came to do thy will," and did it. And the Father's voice said, "Speak these words to men," and He, "Amen," and He spoke.

You say: "That is just what I do not want to do." I know that. We want to be inde-

pendent; have our own way. "The things that please God—this Man was subject to the divine will." You know the two words—if you can learn to say them, not like a parrot, not glibly, but out of your heart—the two words that will help you "Halleluiah" and "Amen." You can say them in Welsh or any language you like; they are always the same. When the next dispensation of God's dealings faces you look at it and say: "Halleluiah! Praise God! Amen!" That means, "I agree."

Third, sympathy. Now, you have this Man turned toward other men. We have seen something of Him as He faced God: Spirituality, a sense of God; subjection, a perpetual amen to the divine volition. Now, He faces the crowd. Sympathy! Why? Because He is right with God, He is right with men; because He feels God near, and knows Him, and responds to the divine will; therefore, when He faces men He is right toward men. The settlement of every social problem you have in this country and in my own land, the settlement of the whole business, will be found in the return of man to God. When man gets back to God he gets back to men. What is behind it? Sympathy is the power of putting my spirit outside my personality, into the circumstances of another man, and feeling as that man feels.

I take one picture as an illustration of this.

I see the Master approaching the city of Nain, and around Him His disciples. He is coming up. And I see outside the city of Nain, coming toward the gate a man carried by others, dead, and walking by that bier a mother. Now, all I want you to look at is that woman's face, and, looking into her face, see all the anguish of those circumstances. She is a widow, and that is her boy, her only boy, and he is dead. Man can not talk about this. You have got to be in the house to know what that means. But look at her face—there it is. All the sorrow is on her face. You can see it.

Now, turn from her quickly and look into the face of Christ. Why, I look into His face —there is her face. He is feeling all she is feeling; He is down in her sorrow with her; He has got underneath the burden, and He is feeling all the agony that that woman feels because her boy is dead. He is moved with compassion whenever human sorrow crosses His vision and human need approaches Him. And now I see Him moving toward the bier. I see Him as He touches it. And He takes the boy back and gives him to his mother. Do you see in yon mountain a cloud, so somber and sad, and suddenly the sun comes from behind the cloud, and all the mountain-side laughs with gladness? That is that woman's face. The agony is gone. The tear that remains there is gilded with a smile, and joy is on her face. Look at Him. There it is. He

is in her joy now. He is having as good a time as the woman. He has carried her grief and her sorrow. He has given her joy. And it is His joy that He has given to her. He is with her in her joy.

Wonderful sympathy! He went about gathering human sorrow into His own heart, scattering His joy, and having fellowship in agony and in deliverance, in tears and in their wiping away. Great, sympathetic soul! Why? Because He always lived with God, and, living with God, the divine love moved Him with compassion. Ah, believe me, our sorrows are more felt in heaven than on earth. And we had that glimpse of that eternal love in this Man, who did the things that pleased God, and manifested such wondrous sympathy.

Fourth, strength. The last note is that of strength. You talk about the weakness of Jesus, the frailty of Jesus. I tell you, there never was any one so strong as He. And if you will take the pains of reading His life with that in mind you will find it was one tremendous march of triumph against all opposing forces. About His dying—how did He die? "At last, at last," says the man in his study that does not know anything about Jesus; "at last His enemies became too much for Him, and they killed Him." Nothing of the sort. That is a very superficial reading. What is the truth? Hear it from His own lips: "No man taketh my life from me. I lay

it down of myself. And if I lay it down I have authority to take it again." What do you think of that? How does that touch you as a revelation of magnificence in strength? And then, look at Him, when He comes back from the tomb, having fulfilled that which was either an empty boast or a great fact—thank God, we believe it was a great fact! Now He stands upon the mountain, with this handful of men around Him, His disciples, and He is going away from them. "All authority," He says, "is given unto me. I am king not merely by an office conferred, but by a triumph won. I am king, for I have faced the enemies of the race—sin and sorrow and ignorance and death—and my foot is upon the neck of every one. All authority is given to me."

Oh, the strength of this Man! Where did He get it? "My Father hath not left me alone. I have lived with God. I have walked with God. I always knew him near. I always responded to his will. And my heart went out in sympathy to others, and I mastered the enemies of those with whom I sympathized. And I come to the end and I say, All authority is given to me." Oh, my brother, that is the pattern for you and for me! Ah, that is life! That is the ideal! Oh, how can I fulfil it? I am not going to talk about that. Let me only give you this sentence to finish with, "Christ in you, the

hope of glory." If Christ be in me by the power of the Spirit, He will keep me conscious of God's nearness to me. If Christ be in me by the consciousness of the spirit reigning and governing, He will take my will from day to day, blend it with His, and take away all that makes it hard to say, "God's will be done."

CADMAN

A NEW DAY FOR MISSIONS

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

S. PARKES CADMAN is one of the many immigrant clergymen who have attained to fame in American pulpits. He was born in Shropshire, England, December 18, 1864, and graduated from Richmond College, London University, in 1889. Coming to this country about 1895 he was appointed pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Metropolitan Tabernacle, New York. From this post he was called to Central Congregational Church, Brooklyn, with but one exception the largest Congregational Church in the United States. He has received the degree of D.D. from Wesleyan University and the University of Syracuse. The sermon here given, somewhat abridged, was delivered before the National Council of Congregational Churches, in Cleveland, Ohio, and is from Dr. Cadman's manuscript.

CADMAN

Born in 1864

A NEW DAY FOR MISSIONS

God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.—Gal. vi., 14.

THE pivotal conception of missionary enterprise is the conception of Christ as the eternal priest of humanity. If any need of the world's heart is before us now, it is the need of the Cross. There is a deep and anxious desire in men for the saving forces of sacrificial Christianity. The ideals of the New Testament concerning Gethsemane and Calvary are being thrust upon our attention by the upward strugglings of the people. They, at any rate, have not forgotten the forsaken Man in the night of awful silence in the garden, nor His exceeding bitter agony, nor the perfect ending that made His death His victory. The wastes of eccentricity, whether orthodox or heterodox, and the overcurious speculations of theologies remote from the habitations of men, have had little influence upon the multitudes we seek to serve. And if I had to choose a sphere

where one could rediscover the central forces of Christian life and of Christian practise, I would lean toward the enlightened democracies which to-day are vibrant with the plea that the shepherdless multitudes shall have social ameliorations and new incentives and selfless leaders.

We are all very jealous for the honor and success of the propagandism we sustain at home and abroad, and I hold that its honor and success alike depend upon the priesthood and redemptive efficacies of Jesus. These sovereign forces are correlated with His victories for the twenty past centuries, and they constitute the distinctive genius of the faith.

We shall gain nothing for the rule or for the ethics of Jesus by derogating that peculiar office of the divine Victim which is, to me, at any rate, the most sublime reason for the Incarnation and the ineffable height and depth and mystery of all love and all strength blessedly operative in every ruined condition by means of sacrifice. The missionary fields confessedly can not be conquered by the unaided teacher; he must have more than a system of truth, more than a program, more than a reasoned discourse. Their vast inert mass demands vitalization; and the life which is given for the life of men, the divinest gift of all, is alone sufficient for this regeneration.

Moreover, can we rest the absolutism and finality of Jesus upon anything less than the

last complete outpouring of His soul unto voluntary death for men's salvation? I do not think we can, and it is a requisite that we place larger emphasis upon this holy mystery of our life through Christ's death, the substantial soul and secret of all missionary progress in all ages of the Church.

Before we can see the miracle of nations entering the kingdom of God, before we can dismiss the black death of apathy which rests on so many professedly Christian communities, before we can dominate the social structure in righteousness and justice, the Church must be raised nearer to the standards of New Testament efficiency. And New Testament efficiency rested upon the perfect divinity and all-persuasive mediatorship of "Christ and him crucified." The personality of Christ involves for many of us the entire relation of God to His universe; He is "the central figure in all history," and He is "the central figure of our personal experience," creative in us, by His inaugural experience, of all we are in Him and for our fellows. Thus we make great claims for the Lord of the harvest, and we make them soberly, and we know them true for our spiritual consciousness, and we are prepared to defend them.

Yet I, for one, do not hesitate to admit that the theological necessities of missionary work are many, and that they must be recognized and met before it can fully accomplish its

infinite design. Indeed, the rule of Jesus in all these aspects of His mission clarifies and simplifies the gospel. It is plain that such a gospel, wherein the living personality of the Christ deals with the living man to whom we minister, is not to be beset by complications and abstractions. Its spiritual topography embraces the height of good, the depth of love, the breadth of sympathy, and the width of catholicity. It was meant for the race and for the far-reaching reciprocities and inexpressible necessities of the race. It is attuned to the cry of the common heart. Its interpretations have the sanctions of an authoritative human experience which has never failed in its witness. Sometimes I have challenged these honored servants of the evangel who have come back to us from quarters where they were busy on the errands of the cross. Almost pathetically, with the painful interest of one inquiring for a long absent friend of whom no news has been received, I have solicited the missionaries. They came from the south of our own dear land, where they administered to the negro; from the arctic zone, from the farther East. Their wider vision, their more imperial instinct, were plain to me, and my usual question was, "What do you teach the impulsive colored man and the stolid Eskimo and the pensive Hindu and the inscrutable Asiatic?" And they replied, "We teach them that God is a personal spirit and

Father, whose character is holiness and whose heart is love; that Jesus Christ is the designed and supreme Son of God, who lived in sinlessness and died in perfect willing sacrifice for the eternal life of all men, that by the will of God and in the power of His spirit men may have everlasting life and, better still, everlasting goodness, if they will accept and trust in Jesus Christ for all."

And this gospel obtains the day of overcoming for which we plead and pray. For tho an angel from heaven had any other, men do not respond; the charisma rests on no other message. Possest of it, and possessing it, under the covenant of heaven and led by the Shepherd and Bishop of souls, we shall go forth determined to give it place in us and in our presentations as never before. May nothing mar the solemn splendor of such a message from God unto men. Let us subordinate our undue intellectualism and place our boasted freedom under restraints, so that the evangel may be preached without reserve and with abandon. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all."

Such in one grand passage is the creed that breathes the very life and spirit of the most significant and overwhelming missionary period in the history of the Christian Church.

There is a new day due in missions because

of the immense superiority in missionary methods. The *personnel* of our administrations has been superb, and of nearly all the honored servants of God who have labored in domestic and foreign departments it could be said, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity." But I presume these seasoned veterans would be the first to show us how the whole conception of propagandism has been readapted, and its vehicles of communication multiplied in various directions. The onfall and sally of the earler evangelistic campaigns are now aided by the investment and siege of educational and medical work.

The trackways of a policy embedded in the wider interpretation of the gospel are laid and the new era takes shape before our comprehension. Travel, exploration, and commerce have demanded and obtained the *Lusitania* on the sea; the railroad from the Cape to Cairo on the land, and they have left no spot of earth untrodden, no map obscure, no mart unvisited. Keeping step with this stately and unprecedented development, and often anticipating it, the widening frontiers of our missionary kingdom have demonstrated again and again how the Church can make a bridal of the earth and sky, linking the lowliest needs to the loftiest truths. And best of all in respect of methods is the dispersal of our native egotism. We have come to see that the types of Christianity in Europe and America are perhaps aboriginal

for us, but can not be transplanted to other shores. "Manifest destiny" is a phrase that sits down when Japan and China wake up. Not thus can Jesus be robbed of the fruits of His passion in any branch of the human family. We are to plant and water, labor in faith, and die in hope, scattering the seed of the gospel in the hearts of these brothers of regions outside. But God will ordain their harvests as it pleaseth Him. What will be the joy of that harvest? Throw your imagination across this new century, and as it dies and gives place to its successor, review the race whose devotion has then fastened on the divine ruler and the federal Man, Christ Jesus. For nearly a hundred years the barriers that segregated us will have been a memory. The Church will have discovered not only fields of labor, but forces for her replenishing. Then will our posterity rejoice in the larger Christ who is to be. The virtuous elements of all other faiths will be placed under the purification and control of the priesthood and authority of Jesus. And tho in these ancient religions that await the Bridegroom, the mortal stains the immortal and the human mars the beauty of the divine, in the light of His appearing they will assume new attitudes and receive His quickening and thrill with His pulse. When I conceive of this reward for our Daysman I protest that all other triumphs seem as tinsel and sham. The

Desire of all nations shall then see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. The subtle patience of China, the fierce resistance of Japan, the brooding soul that haunts the Ganges valley, the tumult of emotion of the Ethiopian breast, all are for His appearing; they must be saved unto noble ends by His sanctification. For that time there will be a Church whose canonization of the infinite is beyond our dreams, enriched on every side, with common allegiance and diversity of gifts, and every gift the boon of all, and Christ's dower in His bride increased beyond compare.

This is the ideal of the new day; may it become our personal ideal. Then shall we fight with new courage for the right, and abhor the imperfect, the unjust, and the mean. Our leaders will care nothing for flattery and praise or odium and abuse. Enthusiasm can not be soured, nor courage diminished. The Almighty has placed our hand on the greatest of His plows, in whose furrow the nations I have named are germinating religiously. And to drive forward the blade if but a little, and to plant any seed of justice and of joy, any sense of manliness or moral worth, to aid in any way the gospel which is the friend of liberty, the companion of the conscience and the parent of the intellectual enlightenment—is not that enough? Is it not a complete justification of our plea?

We shall do well to remember that no

evangel can prosper without the evangelical temper. The parsing of grammarians is of little avail here, and to have all critical knowledge of the prophets and apostles of the faith without their fervor and consecration is profitable merely for study, and useless mainly for the larger life. Our culture must be the passion-flower of Christ Jesus. To be more anxious about intellectual preeminence or ecclesiastical origins than about "the trial of the immigrant" and the condition of the colored races is not helpful. "There is a sort of orthodoxy that revels in the visions of apocalypses and refuses to fight the beast," says Dr. Nurgan. Such barren indulgence is excluded from any glory to follow. Technicalities, niceties, knowledge remote and knowledge general must be appropriated and made dynamic in this life-and-death conflict; any that can not be thus used can be sent to the rear for a further debate.

Diplomacies in church government and adjustments in church creeds can wait on this consecration, this baptism of unction. I never heard that the statesman who formulated the peace at Paris in 1815 got in the way of the Household Brigades and the Highlanders at Waterloo and Hougomont. They played their commendable game, but they could not have swept that awful slope of flame in which Ney and the Old Guard staggered on at Mont St. Jean.

Let us redeem our creeds at the front, and prove the welding of our weapons and their tempered blades upon every evil way and darkness and superstition that afflict humankind.

And have you not seen with moistened eyes and beating hearts the pathetic surgings of harassed and broken sons and daughters of God toward His son Jesus Christ? I have watched them until I felt constrained to cry aloud and spare not; and while viewing them here and yonder, and refusing to be localized in our love toward them, have not our spirits been rebuked, have they not known fear for ourselves, have they not pensively echoed the charge of some that we have no real roots in democracy, but are as plants in pots, and not as oaks in the soil of earth? If independency is a barrier to the essence of which it is supposedly a form, if superiority shuts us off from assimilation with popular movements and delivers us over to cliques, then these churches of ours[1] will end in a record of shame and confusion. While we are busy in trivial things, our energy and our might will be deflected, and the living God will hand over the crusade to those who have proven worthier and who knew the day when it did come, even the day of their visitation.

[1] The special reference is to the Congregational churches.

We must arise with courage undismayed, and join in the cry of the ages:

When wilt thou save the people,
O God of mercy, when?
The people! Lord, the people!
Not crowns, nor thrones, but men.

Flower of thy heart, O Lord, are they,
Their heritage a sunless day.
Let them like weeds not fade away;
Lord, save the people.

If our hearts are thus enlarged, we shall run in the way of His commandments; fatherhood and brotherhood and sonship will not be symbols, shibboleths of pious intercourse, but ways of God's reaching out through us for the total brotherhood. We shall silence the caviler against missions; we shall raise the negro in the face of those who say he can not be raised; we shall see the latter-day miracles, and the lame man healed and rejoicing at the Temple gate. Thus may the breath of God sweep across our pastorates and dismiss timidity, provincialism, ease, and narrowness of outlook. And thus may the power be demonstrated as of heaven because it is the power unto salvation. Let us fear not men who shall die, nor be content to fill our peaceful lot and occupy a respectable grave. The new world needs the renewed baptism, and the "modernism" of which medievalists complain is the robe of honor for the

Christ of this epoch. So that there shall come unto the Church the flame of sacred love, and, kindling on every heart and altar, there shall it burn for the glory of Christ, the High Priest, with inextinguishable blaze. We can rest content, for, behold! the day cometh and in its light. Let us go hence.

JOWETT

APOSTOLIC OPTIMISM

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

JOHN HENRY JOWETT, Congregational divine, was born at Barnard Castle, Durham, in 1864, and educated at Edinburgh and Oxford universities. In 1889 he was ordained to St. James's Congregational Church, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and in 1895 was called to his present pastorate of Carr's Lane Congregational Church, Birmingham, where he has taken rank among the leading preachers of Great Britain. He is the author of several important books.

JOWETT

Born in 1864

APOSTOLIC OPTIMISM[1]

Rejoicing in hope.—Romans xii., 12.

THAT is a characteristic expression of the fine, genial optimism of the Apostle Paul. His eyes are always illumined. The cheery tone is never absent from his speech. The buoyant and springy movement of his life is never changed. The light never dies out of his sky. Even the gray firmament reveals more hopeful tints, and becomes significant of evolving glory. The apostle is an optimist, "rejoicing in hope," a child of light wearing the "armor of light," "walking in the light" even as Christ is in the light.

This apostolic optimism was not a thin and fleeting sentiment begotten of a cloudless summer day. It was not the creation of a season; it was the permanent pose of the spirit. Even when beset with circumstances which to the world would spell defeat, the apostle moved with the mien of a conqueror. He never lost the kingly posture. He was disturbed by no timidity about ultimate issues. He fought and labored in the spirit of cer-

[1] Reprinted by permission of A. C. Armstrong & Son.

tain triumph. "We are always confident." "We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

This apostolic optimism was not born of sluggish thinking, or of idle and shallow observation. I am very grateful that the counsel of my text lifts its chaste and cheery flame in the twelfth chapter of an epistle of which the first chapter contains as dark and searching an indictment of our nature as the mind of man has ever drawn. Let me rehearse the appalling catalog that the radiance of the apostle's optimism may appear the more abounding: "Senseless hearts," "fools," "uncleanness," "vile passions," "reprobate minds," "unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity, whisperers, backbiters, hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful." With fearless severity the apostle leads us through the black realms of midnight and eclipse. And yet in the subsequent reaches of the great argument, of which these dark regions form the preface, there emerges the clear, calm, steady light of my optimistic text. I say it is not the buoyancy of ignorance. It is not the flippant, lighthearted expectancy of a man who knows noth-

ing about the secret places of the night. The counselor is a man who has steadily gazed at light at its worst, who has digged through the outer walls of convention and respectability, who has pushed his way into the secret chambers and closets of life, who has dragged out the slimy sins which were lurking in their holes, and named them after their kind—it is this man who when he has surveyed the dimensions of evil and misery and contempt, merges his dark indictment in a cheery and expansive dawn, in an optimistic evangel, in which he counsels his fellow-disciples to maintain the confident attitude of a rejoicing hope.

Now, what are the secrets of this courageous and energetic optimism? Perhaps, if we explore the life of this great apostle, and seek to discover its springs, we may find the clue to his abounding hope. Roaming then through the entire records of his life and teachings, do we discover any significant emphasis? Preeminent above all other suggestions, I am imprest with his vivid sense of the reality of the redemptive work of Christ. Turn where I will, the redemptive work of the Christ evidences itself as the base and groundwork of his life. It is not only that here and there are solid statements of doctrine, wherein some massive argument is constructed for the partial unveiling of redemptive glory. Even in those parts of his epistles where

formal argument has ceased, and where solid doctrine is absent, the doctrine flows as a fluid element into the practical convictions of life, and determines the shape and quality of the judgments. Nay, one might legitimately use the figure of a finer medium still, and say that in all the spacious reaches of the apostle's life the redemptive work of his Master is present as an atmosphere in which all his thoughts and purposes and labors find their sustaining and enriching breath. Take this epistle to the Romans in which my text is found. The earlier stages of the great epistle are devoted to a massive and stately presentation of the doctrines of redemption. But when I turn over the pages where the majestic argument is concluded, I find the doctrine persisting in a diffused and rarefied form, and appearing as the determining factor in the solution of practical problems. If he is dealing with the question of the "eating of meats," the great doctrine reappears and interposes its solemn and yet elevating principle: "destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died." If he is called upon to administer rebuke to the passionate and unclean, the shadow of the cross rests upon his judgment. "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price." If he is portraying the ideal relationship of husband and wife, he sets it in the light of redemptive glory: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the

church, and gave himself up for it." If he is seeking to cultivate the grace of liberality, he brings the heavenly air around about the spirit. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that tho he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor." It interweaves itself with all his salutations. It exhales in all his benedictions like a hallowing fragrance. You can not get away from it. In the light of the glory of redemption all relationships are assorted and arranged. Redemption was not degraded into a fine abstract argument, to which the apostle had appended his own approval, and then, with sober satisfaction, had laid it aside, as a practical irrelevancy, in the stout chests of orthodoxy. It became the very spirit of his life. It was, if I may be allowed the violent figure, the warm blood in all his judgment. It filled the veins of all his thinking. It beat like a pulse in all his purposes. It determined and vitalized his decisions in the crisis, as well as in the lesser trifles of the common day. His conception of redemption was regulative of all his thought.

But it is not only the immediacy of redemption in the apostle's thought by which I am imprest. I stand in awed amazement before its vast, far-stretching reaches into the eternities. Said an old villager to me concerning the air of his elevated hamlet, "Ay, sir, it's a fine air is this westerly breeze; I like to think of it as having traveled from the dis-

tant fields of the Atlantic!" And here is the Apostle Paul, with the quickening wind of redemption blowing about him in loosening, vitalizing, strengthening influence, and to him, in all his thinking, it had its birth in the distant fields of eternity! To the apostle redemption was not a small device, an afterthought, a patched-up expedient to meet an unforseen emergency. The redemptive purpose lay back in the abyss of the eternities, and in a spirit of reverent questioning the apostle sent his trembling thoughts into those lone and silent fields. He emerged with whispered secrets such as these: "fore-knew," "fore-ordained," "chosen in him before the foundation of the world," "eternal life promised before times eternal," "the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Brethren, does our common thought of redemptive glory reach back into this august and awful presence? Does the thought of the modern disciple journey in this distant pilgrimage? Or do we now regard it as unpractical and irrelevant? There is no more insidious peril in modern religious life than the debasement of our conception of the practical. If we divorce the practical from the sublime, the practical will become the superficial, and will degenerate into a very lean and forceless thing. When Paul went on this lonely pilgrimage his spirit acquired the pos-

ture of a finely sensitive reverence. People who live and move beneath great domes acquire a certain calm and stately dignity. It is in companionship with the sublimities that awkwardness and coarseness are destroyed. We lose our reverence when we desert the august. But has reverence no relationship to the practical? Shall we discard it as an irrelevant factor in the purposes of common life? Why, reverence is the very clue to fruitful, practical living. Reverence is creative of hope; nay, a more definite emphasis can be given to the assertion; reverence is a constituent of hope. Annihilate reverence, and life loses its fine sensitiveness, and when sensitiveness goes out of a life the hope that remains is only a flippant rashness, a thoughtless impetuosity, the careless onrush of the kine, and not a firm, assured perception of a triumph that is only delayed. A reverent homage before the sublimities of yesterday is the condition of a fine perception of the hidden triumphs of the morrow. And, therefore, I do not regard it as an accidental conjunction that the psalmist puts them together and proclaims the evangel that "the Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in them that hope in his mercy." To feel the days before me I must revere the purpose which throbs behind me. I must bow in reverence if I would anticipate in hope.

Here, then, is the Apostle Paul, with the

redemptive purpose interweaving itself with all the entanglements of his common life, a purpose reaching back into the awful depths of the eternities, and issuing from those depths in amazing fulness of grace and glory. No one can be five minutes in the companionship of the Apostle Paul without discovering how wealthy is his sense of the wealthy, redeeming ministry of God. What a wonderful consciousness he has of the sweep and fulness of the divine grace! You know the variations of the glorious air: "the unsearchable riches of Christ"; "riches in glory in Christ Jesus"; "all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ"; "the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering." The redemptive purpose of God bears upon the life of the apostle and upon the race whose privileges he shares, not in an uncertain and reluctant shower, but in a great and marvelous flood. And what to him is the resultant enfranchisement? What are the spacious issues of the glorious work? Do you recall those wonderful sentences, scattered here and there about the apostle's writings, and beginning with the words "but now"? Each sentence proclaims the end of the dominion of night, and unveils some glimpse of the new created day. "But now!" It is a phrase that heralds a great deliverance! "But now, apart from the law the righteousness of God hath been manifested." "But

now, being made free from sin and become servants to God." "But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ." "But now are ye light in the Lord." "Now, no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." These represent no thin abstractions. To Paul the realities of which they speak were more real than the firm and solid earth. And is it any wonder that a man with such a magnificent sense of the reality of the redemptive works of Christ, who felt the eternal purpose throbbing in the dark background and abyss of time, who conceived it operating upon our race in floods of grace and glory, and who realized in his own immediate consciousness the varied wealth of the resultant emancipation—is it any wonder that for this man a new day had dawned, and the birds had begun to sing and the flowers to bloom, and a sunny optimism had taken possession of his heart, which found expression in an assured and rejoicing hope?

I look abroad again over the record of this man's life and teachings, if perchance I may discover the secrets of his abiding optimism, and I am profoundly imprest by his living sense of the reality and greatness of his present resources. "By Christ redeemed!" That is not a grand finale; it is only a glorious inauguration. "By Christ redeemed; in Christ restored"; it is with these dynamics of restoration that his epistles are so wondrously

abounding. In almost every other sentence he suggests a dynamic which he can count upon as his friend. Paul's mental and spiritual outlook comprehended a great army of positive forces laboring in the interests of the kingdom of God. His conception of life was amazingly rich in friendly dynamics! I do not wonder that such a wealthy consciousness was creative of a triumphant optimism. Just glance at some of the apostle's auxiliaries: "Christ liveth in me!" "Christ liveth in me! He breathes through all my aspirations. He thinks through all my thinking. He wills through all my willing. He loves through all my loving. He travails in all my labors. He works within me 'to will and to do of his good pleasure.'" That is the primary faith of the hopeful life. But see what follows in swift and immediate succession. "If Christ is in you, the spirit is life." "The spirit is life!" And therefore you find that in the apostle's thought dispositions are powers. They are not passive entities. They are positive forces vitalizing and energizing the common life of men. My brethren, I am persuaded there is a perilous leakage in this department of our thought. We are not bold enough in our thinking concerning spiritual realities. We do not associate with every mode of the consecrated spirit the mighty energy of God. We too often oust from our practical calculations some of the strongest and most

aggressive allies of the saintly life. Meekness is more than the absence of self-assertion; it is the manifestation of the mighty power of God. To the Apostle Paul love exprest more than a relationship. It was an energy productive of abundant labors. Faith was more than an attitude. It was an energy creative of mighty endeavor. Hope was more than a posture. It was an energy generative of a most enduring patience. All these are dynamics, to be counted as active allies, cooperating in the ministry of the kingdom. And so the epistles abound in the recital of mystic ministries at work. The Holy Spirit worketh! Grace worketh! Faith worketh! Love worketh! Hope worketh! Prayer worketh! And there are other allies robed in less attractive garb. "Tribulation worketh!" "This light affliction worketh." "Godly sorrow worketh!" On every side of him the apostle conceives cooperative and friendly powers. "The mountain is full of horses and chariots of fire round about him." He exults in the consciousness of abounding resources. He discovers the friends of God in things which find no place among the scheduled powers of the world. He finds God's raw material in the world's discarded waste. "Weak things," "base things," "things that are despised," "things that are not," mere nothings; among these he discovers the operating agents of the mighty God. Is it any wonder that in this

man, possessed of such a wealthy consciousness of multiplied resources, the spirit of a cheery optimism should be enthroned? With what stout confidence he goes into the fight! He never mentions the enemy timidly. He never seeks to underestimate his strength. Nay, again and again he catalogs all possible antagonisms in a spirit of buoyant and exuberant triumph. However numerous the enemy, however subtle and aggressive his devices, however towering and well-established the iniquity, however black the gathering clouds, so sensitive is the apostle to the wealthy resources of God that amid it all he remains a sunny optimist, "rejoicing in hope," laboring in the spirit of a conqueror even when the world was exulting in his supposed discomfiture and defeat.

And, finally, in searching for the springs of this man's optimism, I place alongside his sense of the reality of redemption and his wealthy consciousness of present resources his impressive sense of the reality of future glory. Paul gave himself time to think of heaven, of the home of God, of his own home when time should be no more. He loved to contemplate "the glory that shall be revealed." He mused in wistful expectancy of the day "when Christ who is our life shall be manifested," and when we also "shall be manifested with him in glory." He pondered the thought of death as "gain," as transferring him

to conditions in which he would be "at home with the Lord," "with Christ, which is far better." He looked for "the blest hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ," and he contemplated "that great day" as the "henceforth," which would reveal to him the crown of righteousness and glory. Is any one prepared to dissociate this contemplation from the apostle's cheery optimism? Is not rather the thought of coming glory one of its abiding springs? Can we safely exile it from our moral and spiritual culture? I know that this particular contemplation is largely absent from modern religious life, and I know the nature of the recoil in which our present impoverishment began. "Let us hear less about the mansions of the blest and more about the housing of the poor!" Men revolted against an effeminate contemplation, which had run to seed, in favor of an active philanthropy which sought the enrichment of the common life. But, my brethren, pulling a plant up is not the only way of saving it from running to seed. You can accomplish by a wise restriction what is wastefully done by severe destruction. I think we have lost immeasurably by the uprooting, in so many lives, of this plant of heavenly contemplation. We have built on the erroneous assumption that the contemplation of future glory inevitably unfits us for the service of man. It is an egregious

and destructive mistake. I do not think that Richard Baxter's labors were thinned or impoverished by his contemplation of "The Saint's Everlasting Rest." When I consider his mental output, his abundant labors as father-confessor to a countless host, his pains and persecutions and imprisonments, I can not but think he received some of the powers of his optimistic endurance from contemplations such as he counsels in his incomparable book. "Run familiarly through the streets of the heavenly Jerusalem; visit the patriarchs and prophets, salute the apostles, and admire the armies of martyrs; lead on the heart from street to street, bring it into the palace of the great king; lead it, as it were, from chamber to chamber. Say to it, 'Here must I lodge, here must I die, here must I praise, here must I love and be loved. My tears will then be wiped away, my groans be turned to another tune, my cottage of clay be changed to this palace, my prison rags to these splendid robes'; 'for the former things are passed away.'" I can not think that Samuel Rutherford impoverished his spirit or deadened his affections, or diminished his labors by mental pilgrimages such as he counsels to Lady Cardoness: "Go up beforehand and see your lodging. Look through all your Father's rooms in heaven. Men take a sight of the lands ere they buy them. I know that Christ hath made the bargain already; but be kind

to the house ye are going to, and see it often." I can not think that this would imperil the fruitful optimisms of the Christian life. I often examine, with peculiar interest, the hymn-book we use at Carr's Lane. It was compiled by Dr. Dale. Nowhere else can I find the broad perspective of his theology and his primary helpmeets in the devotional life as I find them there. And is it altogether unsuggestive that under the heading of "Heaven" is to be found one of the largest sections of the book. A greater space is given to "Heaven" than is given to "Christian duty." Is it not significant of what a great man of affairs found needful for the enkindling and sustenance of a courageous hope? And among the hymns are many which have helped to nourish the sunny endeavors of a countless host.

There is a land of pure delight
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

What are these, arrayed in white,
Brighter than the noonday sun?
Foremost of the suns of light,
Nearest the eternal throne.

Hark! hark, my soul! Angelic songs are swelling
O'er earth's green fields and ocean's wave-beat shore.
Angelic songs to sinful men are telling
Of that new life when sin shall be no more.

My brethren, depend upon it, we are not impoverished by contemplations such as these. They take no strength out of the hand, and they put much strength and buoyancy into the heart. I proclaim the contemplation of coming glory as one of the secrets of the apostle's optimism which enabled him to labor and endure in the confident spirit of rejoicing hope. These, then, are some of the springs of Christian optimism; some of the sources in which we may nourish our hope in the newer labors of a larger day: a sense of the glory of the past in a perfected redemption, a sense of the glory of the present in our multiplied resources, a sense of the glory of to-morrow in the fruitful rest of our eternal home.

O blest hope! with this elate
Let not our hearts be desolate;
But, strong in faith and patience, wait
Until He come!

GENERAL INDEX

INDEX TO PREACHERS AND SERMONS

	VOLUME	PAGE
Abbott, Lyman, The Divinity in Humanity.....	VIII	63
Abraham's Imitators; or The Activity of Faith. By Thomas Hooker.....	II	3
Affection, The Expulsive Power of a New. By Thomas Chalmers.....	IV	55
Argument, The, from Experience. By Robert William Dale	VII	105
Arnold, Thomas, Alive in God.....	IV	133
Ascension, The, of Christ. By Girolamo Savonarola	I	93
Assurance in God. By George Adam Smith.....	X	97
Atonement, Eternal. By Roswell Dwight Hitchcock	VI	133
Atonement, The Prominence of the. By Edwards Amasa Park	V	89
Augustine, St., The Recovery of Sight by the Blind	I	49
Bacon, Leonard Woolsey, God Indwelling.....	VII	181
Basil "The Great," The Creation of the World..	I	3
Baxter, Richard, Making Light of Christ and Salvation	II	59
Beecher, H. W., Immortality.....	VI	3
Beecher, Lyman, The Government of God Desirable	IV	3
Bible, The, vs. Infidelity. By Frank Wakely Gunsaulus	X	111
Blair, Hugh, The Hour and the Event of All Time	III	113
Blind, The Recovery of Sight by the. By St. Augustine	I	49

INDEX

	VOLUME	PAGE
Bones, The Valley of Dry. By Frederick Denison Maurice	V	25
Bossuet, Jacques Benigne, The Death of the Grande Condé	II	85
Bounty, The Royal. By Alexander McKenzie	VII	211
Bourdaloue, Louis, The Passion of Christ	II	181
Broadus, John A., Let us Have Peace with God	IX	21
Brooks, Memorial Discourse on Phillips. By Henry Codman Potter	VIII	43
Brooks, Phillips, The Pride of Life	VIII	83
Bunyan, John, The Heavenly Footman	II	105
Burrell, David James, How to Become a Christian	IX	185
Bushnell, Horace, Unconscious Influence	IV	235
Cadman, S. Parkes, A New Day for Missions	X	205
Caird, John, Religion in Common Life	VI	169
Calvin, John, Enduring Persecution for Christ	I	205
Campbell, Alexander, The Missionary Cause	IV	81
Carlyle, Thomas,—In Memoriam. By Arthur Penrhyn Stanley	VI	53
Carpenter, William Boyd, The Age of Progress	IX	93
Chalmers, Thomas, The Expulsive Power of a New Affection	IV	55
Channing, William Ellery, The Character of Christ	IV	29
Chapin, Edwin Hubbell Nicodemus: The Seeker after Religion	VI	29
Character, The, of Christ. By William Ellery Channing	IV	29
Christ and Salvation, Making Light of. By Richard Baxter	II	59
Christ Among the Common Things of Life. By William James Dawson	X	81
Christ Before Pilate—Pilate Before Christ. By William Mackergo Taylor	VII	145
Christ, Enduring Persecution for. By John Calvin	I	205

INDEX

	VOLUME	PAGE
Christ, The Ascension of. By Girolamo Savonarola	I	93
Christ, The Character of. By William Ellery Channing	IV	29
Christ, The First Temptation of. By John Knox	I	173
Christ, The Loneliness of. By Frederick William Robertson	VI	113
Christ, The Passion of. By Louis Bourdaloue	II	181
Christ—*The* Question of the Centuries. By Robert Stuart MacArthur	IX	75
Christ, The Spirit of. By Charles H. Fowler	VIII	151
Christ, What Think ye of. By Dwight Lyman Moody	VIII	135
Christ, Zeal in the Cause of. By William Morley Punshon	VI	221
Christ's Advent to Judgment. By Jeremy Taylor	II	31
Christ's Real Body not in the Eucharist. By John Wyclif	I	75
Christ's Resurrection an Image of our New Life. By Frederich Ernst Schleiermacher	III	201
Christian, How to Become a. By David James Burrell	IX	185
Christian Victory. By Christopher Newman Hall	VI	87
Christianity, The Mysteries of. By Alexander Vinet	IV	173
Christianity, The Transient and Permanent in. By Theodore Parker	V	149
Chrysostom, Excessive Grief at the Death of Friends	I	25
Church, The Mother. By Ernest Roland Wilberforce	IX	39
Church, The Triumph of the. By Henry Edward Manning	V	63
Clifford, John, The Forgiveness of Sins	VIII	123
Colonization, The, of the Desert. By Edward Everett Hale	VII	3
Common Life, Religion in. By John Caird	VI	169

INDEX

	VOLUME	PAGE
Common Things of Life, Christ Among the. By William James Dawson	X	81
Condé, The Funeral Sermon on the Death of the Grande. By Jacques Benigne Bossuet	II	85
Creation, The, of the World. By Basil	I	3
Creation, Work in the Groaning. By Frederick William Farrar	VII	229
Crosby, Howard, The Prepared Worm	VII	89
Cuyler, Theodore Ledyard, The Value of Life	IX	3
Dale, Robert William, The Argument from Experience	VII	105
Day, A, in the Life of Jesus of Nazareth. By Francis Wayland	IV	147
Dawson, William James, Christ Among the Common Things of Life	X	81
Death, Glorification Through. By Francis Landey Patton	IX	131
Desert, The Colonization of the. By Edward Everett Hale	VII	3
Divinity, The, in Humanity. By Lyman Abbott	VIII	63
Drummond, Henry, The Greatest Thing in the World	X	3
Dwight, Timothy, The Sovereignty of God	III	137
Earth, The Shaking of the Heavens and the. By Charles Kingsley	VI	149
Education and the Future of Religion. By John Lancaster Spalding	IX	51
Edwards, Jonathan, Spiritual light	III	51
Elect, The Small Number of the. By Jean Baptiste Massillon	III	3
Eternal Atonement. By Roswell Dwight Hitchcock	VI	133
Eucharist, Christ's Real Body not in the. By John Wyclif	I	75
Evans, Christmas, The Fall and Recovery of Man	III	183

INDEX

	VOLUME	PAGE
Event, The Hour and the, of all Time. By Hugh Blair	III	113
Experience. By Alexander Whyte	VIII	169
Experience, The Argument from. By Robert William Dale	VII	105
Expulsive Power, The, of a New Affection. By Thomas Chalmers	IV	55
Faith, Constructive. By Charles Henry Parkhurst	IX	113
Faith, The Activity of; or, Abraham's Imitators. By Thomas Hooker	II	3
Faith, The Story of a Disciple's. By Henry Scott Holland	IX	147
Fall, The, and Recovery of Man. By Christmas Evans	III	183
Farrar, Frederick William, Work in the Groaning Creation	VII	229
Fénelon, Francois de Salignac de la Mothe, The Saints Converse with God	II	203
Footman, The Heavenly. By John Bunyan	II	105
Forgiveness, The, of Sins. By John Clifford	VIII	123
Fowler, Charles H., The Spirit of Christ	VIII	151
Funeral Sermon, The, on the Death of the Grande Condé, by Jacques Benigne Bossuet	II	85
Gethsemane, The Rose Garden of God. By William Robertson Nicoll	IX	213
Gladden, Washington, The Prince of Life	VIII	105
Glorification Through Death. By Francis Landey Patton	IX	131
God, Alive in. By Thomas Arnold	IV	133
God Calling to Man. By Charles John Vaughan	VI	69
God Indwelling. By Leonard Woolsey Bacon	VII	181
God, Marks of Love to. By Robert Hall	III	163
God, Preparation for Consulting the Oracles of. By Edward Irving	IV	103

INDEX

	VOLUME	PAGE
God, The Government of, Desirable. By Lyman Beecher	IV	3
God, The Image of, in Man. By Robert South..	II	221
God, The Saints Converse with. By Francois Fénelon	II	203
God, The Sovereignty of. By Timothy Dwight..	III	137
God the Unwearied Guide. By Newell Dwight Hillis	X	139
God's Love to Fallen Man. By John Wesley....	III	73
God's Will the End of Life. By John Henry Newman	IV	209
Gordon, George Angier, Man in the Image of God	X	59
Government, The, of God Desirable. By Lyman Beecher	IV	3
Grace, The Method of. By George Whitefield..	III	93
Greatest Thing, The, in the World. By Henry Drummond	X	3
Grief, Excessive, at the Death of Friends. By Chrysostom	I	25
Guide, God the Unwearied. By Newell Dwight Hillis	X	139
Gunsaulus, Frank Wakely, The Bible vs. Infidelity	X	111
Guthrie, Thomas, The New Heart	V	3
Hale, Edward Everett, The Colonization of the Desert	VII	3
Hall, Christopher Newman, Christian Victory....	VI	87
Hall, John, Liberty only in Truth	VII	165
Hall, Robert, Marks of Love to God	III	163
Heart, The New. By Thomas Guthrie	V	3
Heavens, The Shaking of the, and the Earth. By Charles Kingsley	VI	149
Hillis, Newell Dwight, God the Unwearied Guide	X	139
Hitchcock, Roswell Dwight, The Eternal Atonement	VI	133
Holland, Henry Scott, The Story of a Disciple's Faith	IX	147

INDEX

	VOLUME	PAGE
Holy Spirit, Influence of the. By Henry Parry Liddon	VII	123
Hooker, Thomas, The Activity of Faith; or Abraham's Imitators	II	3
Hour, The, and the Event of all Time. By Hugh Blair	III	113
Howe, John, The Redeemer's Tears over Lost Souls	II	157
Humanity, The Divinity in. By Lyman Abbott	VIII	63
Ideal of Life, The Perfect. By George Campbell Morgan	X	189
Immortality. By H. W. Beecher	VI	3
Infidelity, The Bible vs. By Frank Wakely Gunsaulus	X	111
Influence, Unconscious. By Horace Bushnell	IV	235
Influences of the Holy Spirit. By Henry Parry Liddon	VII	123
Inheritance, The Heavenly. By John Summerfield	IV	191
Irving, Edward, Preparation for Consulting the Oracles of God	IV	103
Jefferson, Charles Edward, The Reconciliation	X	159
Jesus of Nazareth, A Day in the Life of. By Francis Wayland	IV	147
Jowett, John Henry, Apostolic Optimism	X	219
Judgment, Christ's Advent to. By Jeremy Taylor	II	31
Judgment, The Reversal of Human. By James B. Mozley	V	207
Justification, The Method and Fruits of. By Martin Luther	I	115
Kingsley, Charles, The Shaking of the Heavens and the Earth	VI	149
Knox, John, The First Temptation of Christ	I	173

INDEX

	VOLUME	PAGE
Knox-Little, William John, Thirst Satisfied.....	VIII	223
Latimer, Hugh, Christian Love.....	I	147
Life, Christ's Resurrection an Image of our New By Frederich Ernst Schleiermacher.....	III	201
Life, God's Will the End of. By John Henry Newman	IV	209
Life, The Perfect Ideal of. By George Campbell Morgan	X	189
Life, The Pride of. By Phillips Brooks.....	VIII	83
Life, The Prince of. By Washington Gladden..	VIII	105
Life, The Value of. By Theodore Ledyard Cuyler	IX	3
Liberty only in Truth. By John Hall.....	VII	165
Liddon, Henry Parry, Influences of the Holy Spirit	VII	123
Light, Spiritual. By Jonathan Edwards.....	III	51
Loneliness, The, of Christ. By Frederick William Robertson	VI	113
Lord, The Resurrection of Our. By Matthew Simpson	V	121
Lorimer, George C. The Fall of Satan.....	VIII	205
Love, Christian. By Hugh Latimer.....	I	147
Love, Marks of, to God. By Robert Hall.....	III	163
Luther, Martin, The Method and Fruits of Justification	I	115
MacArthur, Robert Stuart, Christ—The Question of the Centuries.....	IX	75
McKenzie, Alexander, The Royal Bounty.....	VII	211
Maclaren, Alexander, The Pattern of Service...	VII	65
Macleod, Norman, The True Christian Ministry.	V	179
Magee, William Connor, The Miraculous Stilling of the Storm.....	VII	21
Man, God Calling to. By Charles John Vaughan	VI	69
Man, God's Love to Fallen. By John Wesley..	III	73
Man in the Image of God. By George Angier Gordon	X	59

INDEX

	VOLUME	PAGE
Man, The Fall and Recovery of. By Christmas Evans	III	183
Man, The Image of God in. By Robert South..	II	221
Manhood, The Meaning of. By Henry Van Dyke	IX	233
Manning, Henry Edward, The Triumph of the Church	V	63
Martineau, James, Parting Words	V	47
Mason, John Mitchell, Messiah's Throne	III	221
Massillon, Jean Baptiste, The Small Number of the Elect	III	3
Maurice, Frederick Denison, The Valley of Dry Bones	V	25
Melanchthon, Philip, The Safety of the Virtuous	I	161
Memorial Discourse on Phillips Brooks. By Henry Codman Potter	VIII	43
Messiah's Throne. By John Mitchell Mason....	III	221
Ministry, The True Christian. By Norman Macleod	V	179
Missions, A New Day for. By. S. Parkes Cadman	X	205
Missionary Cause, The. By Alexander Campbell	IV	81
Missionary Work, The Permanent Motive in. By Richard S. Storrs	VI	197
Monster, A Bloody. By Thomas DeWitt Talmage	VIII	3
Moody, Dwight Lyman, What Think ye of Christ?	VIII	135
Morgan, George Campbell, The Perfect Ideal of Life	X	189
Motive, The Permanent, in Missionary Work. By Richard S. Storrs	VI	197
Mozley, James B., The Reversal of Human Judgment	V	207
Mysteries, The, of Christianity. By Alexander Vinet	IV	173
Newman, John Henry, God's Will the End of Life	IV	209

INDEX

	VOLUME	PAGE
Nicodemus: The Seeker after Religion. By Edwin Hubbell Chapin	VI	29
Nicoll, William Robertson, Gethsemane, The Rose Garden of God	IX	213
Optimism, Apostolic. By John Henry Jowett	X	219
Optimism. By John Watson	IX	201
Oracles, Preparation for Consulting the, of God. By Edward Irving	IV	103
Park, Edwards Amasa, The Prominence of the Atonement	V	89
Parker, Joseph, A Word to the Weary	VII	199
Parker, Theodore, The Transient and Permanent in Christianity	V	149
Parkhurst, Charles Henry, Constructive Faith	IX	113
Passion, The, of Christ. By Louis Bourdaloue	II	181
Patton, Francis Landey, Glorification Through Death	IX	131
Paul Before Felix and Drusilla. By Jacques Saurin	III	25
Peace with God, Let us Have. By John A. Broadus	IX	21
Permanent, The Transient and the, in Christianity. By Theodore Parker	V	149
Persecution for Christ, Enduring, John Calvin	I	205
Pilate Before Christ—Christ Before Pilate. By William Mackergo Taylor	VII	145
Potter, Henry Codman, Memorial Discourse on Phillips Brooks	VIII	43
Pride, The, of Life. By Phillips Brooks	VIII	83
Prince, The, of Life. By Washington Gladden	VIII	105
Progress, The Age of. By William Boyd Carpenter	IX	93
Punshon, William Morley, Zeal in the Cause of Christ	VI	221

INDEX

	VOLUME	PAGE
Reconciliation, The. By Charles E. Jefferson..	X	159
Recovery, The Fall and, of Man. By Christmas Evans	III	183
Redeemer's Tears, The, over Lost Souls. By John Howe	II	157
Religion, Education and the Future of. By John Lancaster Spalding	IX	51
Religion in Common Life. By John Caird.....	VI	169
Religion, Nicodemus: The Seeker after. By Edwin Hubbell Chapin	VI	29
Resurrection, Christ's, an Image of our New Life. By Frederich Ernst Schleiermacher..	III	201
Resurrection, The, of Our Lord. By Matthew Simpson	V	121
Resurrection, The Reasonableness of a. By John Tillotson	II	135
Reversal, The, of Human Judgment. By James B. Mozley	V	207
Robertson, Frederick William, The Loneliness of Christ	VI	113
Royal Bounty, the. By Alexander McKenzie....	VII	211
Sackcloth, The Transfigured. By William L. Watkinson	VIII	181
Saints Converse with God, The. By Francis Fénelon	II	203
Salvation, Making Light of Christ and. By Richard Baxter	II	59
Satan, The Fall of. By George C. Lorimer....	VIII	205
Saurin, Jacques, Paul Before Felix and Drusilla	III	25
Savonarola, Girolamo, The Ascension of Christ..	I	93
Schleiermacher, Frederich Ernst, Christ's Resurrection an Image of our New Life.....	III	201
Seiss, Joseph A., The Wonderful Testimonies....	VII	41
Service, The Pattern of. By Alexander Maclaren	VII	65
Shaking, The, of the Heavens and the Earth. By Charles Kingsley.....	VI	149

INDEX

	VOLUME	PAGE
Sight, The Recovery of, by the Blind. By St. Augustine	I	49
Simpson, Matthew, The Resurrection of Our Lord	V	121
Sins, The Forgiveness of. By John Clifford	VIII	123
Smith, George Adam, Assurance in God	X	97
Songs in the Night. By Charles Haddon Spurgeon	VIII	21
Souls, The Redeemer's Tears Over Lost. By John Howe	II	157
South, Robert, The Image of God in Man	II	221
Sovereignty, The, of God. By Timothy Dwight	III	137
Spalding, John Lancaster, Education and the Future of Religion	IX	51
Spiritual Light. By Jonathan Edwards	III	51
Spurgeon, Charles Haddon, Songs in the Night	VIII	21
Stalker, James, Temptation	IX	167
Stanley, Arthur Penrhyn, In Memoriam—Thomas Carlyle	VI	53
Stilling of the Storm, The Miraculous. By William Connor Magee	VII	21
Storm, The Miraculous Stilling of the. By William Connor Magee	VII	21
Storrs, Richard S., The Permanent Motive in Missionary Work	VI	197
Summerfield, John, The Heavenly Inheritance	IV	191
Talmage, Thomas DeWitt, A Bloody Monster	VIII	3
Taylor, Jeremy, Christ's Advent to Judgment	II	31
Taylor, William Mackergo, Christ Before Pilate —Pilate Before Christ	VII	145
Temptation. By James Stalker	IX	167
Temptation, The First, of Christ. By John Knox	I	173
Testimonies, The Wonderful. By Joseph A. Seiss	VII	41
Thirst Satisfied. By William John Knox-Little	VIII	223
Time, The Hour and the Event of all. By Hugh Blair	III	113
Tillotson, John, The Reasonableness of a Resurrection	II	135

INDEX

	VOLUME	PAGE
Transfigured Sackcloth, The. By William L. Watkinson	VIII	181
Transient, The, and Permanent in Christianity. By Theodore Parker	V	149
Triumph, The, of the Church. By Henry Edward Manning	V	63
Truth, Liberty Only in. By John Hall	VII	165
Valley, The, of Dry Bones. By Frederick Denison Maurice	V	25
Van Dyke, Henry, The Meaning of Manhood	IX	233
Vaughan, Charles John, God Calling to Man	VI	69
Victory, Christian. By Christopher Newman Hall	VI	87
Vinet, Alexander, The Mysteries of Christianity	IV	173
Virtuous, The Safety of the. By Philip Melanchthon	I	161
Voice, I am a. By Charles Wagner	X	39
Wagner, Charles, I am a Voice	X	39
Watkinson, William L., The Transfigured Sackcloth	VIII	181
Watson, John, Optimism	IX	201
Wayland, Francis, A Day in the Life of Jesus of Nazareth	IV	147
Weary, A Word to the. By Joseph Parker	VII	199
Wesley, John, God's Love to Fallen Man	III	73
Whitefield, George, The Method of Grace	III	93
Whyte, Alexander, Experience	VIII	169
Wilberforce, Ernest Roland, The Mother Church	IX	39
Words, Parting. By James Martineau	V	47
Work in the Groaning Creation. By Frederick William Farrar	VII	229
World, The Greatest Thing in the. By Henry Drummond	X	3
Worm, The Prepared. By Howard Crosby	VII	89
Wyclif, John, Christ's Real Body Not in the Eucharist	I	75
Zeal in the Cause of Christ. By William Morley Punshon	VI	221

INDEX TO TEXTS

	VOLUME	PAGE
Genesis i., 2	I	3
i., 27	II	221
i., 31	VII	3
i., 31	VII	229
iii., 9	VI	69
xxxvii., 33	VIII	3
1 Kings x., 13	VII	211
iv., 36	IX	39
2 Kings vi., 1, 2	IX	93
Esther iv., 2	VIII	181
Job xxxiii., 4	IX	3
xxxv., 10	VIII	21
Psalms xvi. 1	X	97
xlii., 2	VIII	223
cxix., 45	VII	165
cxix., 129	VII	41
Proverbs xi., 30	IV	81
Isaiah xl., 1-31	X	139
l., 4	VII	199
lvii., 15	VII	181
Jeremiah vi., 14	III	93
x., 23	III	137
Ezekiel xxxvi., 26	V	3
xxxvii., 1-3	V	25
Jonah iv., 7	VII	89
Matthew iv., 1	I	173
vi., 10	IV	3
viii., 25, 26	VII	21
xii., 12	IX	233
xiii., 24	VI	53
xvi., 17	III	51
xvii., 5	IV	29
xix., 30	V	207
xx., 30	I	49
xxii., 5	II	59

INDEX

	VOLUME	PAGE
Matthew xxii., 32	IV	133
xxii., 42	VIII	135
xxii., 42	IX	75
xxvi., 26	I	75
xxvii., 22	VII	145
xxviii., 19	IX	201
Mark vii., 33, 34	VII	65
xvi., 15	VI	197
Luke iv., 27	III	3
ix., 10-17	IV	147
x., 18	VIII	205
xix., 41, 42	II	157
xxi., 33	V	149
xxiii., 27, 28	II	181
xxiv., 51	I	93
John i., 23	X	39
iii., 1, 2	VI	29
iii., 8	VII	123
v., 39	IV	103
v., 42	III	163
vi., 38	IV	209
vi., 63	VIII	43
vi., 63	IX	51
viii., 28-30	X	189
x., 28	I	161
x., 34-36	VIII	63
xii., 24	IX	131
xiv., 27	V	47
xv., 12	I	147
xvi., 31, 32	VI	113
xvii., 1	III	113
xvii., 20, 21	V	179
xx., 8	IV	235
xx., 8	IX	147
xxi., 9, 12	X	81
Acts iii., 15	VIII	105
xix., 23	IX	185
xxiv., 24, 25	III	25

INDEX

	VOLUME	PAGE
Acts xxvi., 8	II	135
xxvi., 8	IX	113
Romans iv., 12	II	3
v., 1	IX	21
v., 4	VIII	169
v., 15	III	73
v., 15	III	183
vi., 4	III	201
viii., 9	VIII	151
viii., 22	VII	229
xii., 11	VI	169
xii., 12	X	219
1 Corinthians ii., 2	V	89
ii., 9	IV	173
ix., 24	II	105
xiii.,	X	3
xiv., 10	X	111
xv., 3	X	159
xv., 19	VI	3
xv., 20	V	121
x., 13	IX	167
2 Corinthians ii., 14-16	V	63
v., 10	II	31
v., 13-15	VI	221
Galatians iv., 1-7	I	115
vi., 14	X	205
1 Thessalonians iv., 13	I	25
v., 17	II	203
Hebrews i., 8	III	221
xii., 26-29	VI	149
xiii., 13	I	205
2 Peter i., 11	IV	191
1 John ii., 15	IV	55
ii., 16	VIII	83
Revelations ii., 17	VI	87
xiii., 8	VI	131
xxii., 3	VII	229
Apostles' Creed	VIII	123

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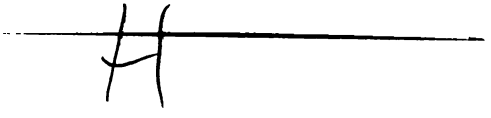

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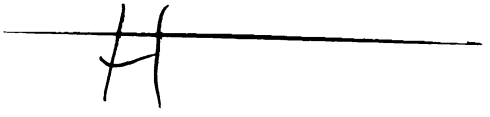

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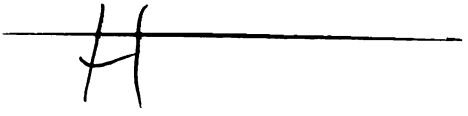
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